

**HISTORY OF  
ENGLISH  
LITERATURE**

**W. F. COLLIER, LL.D.**

**THOMAS NELSON & SONS**



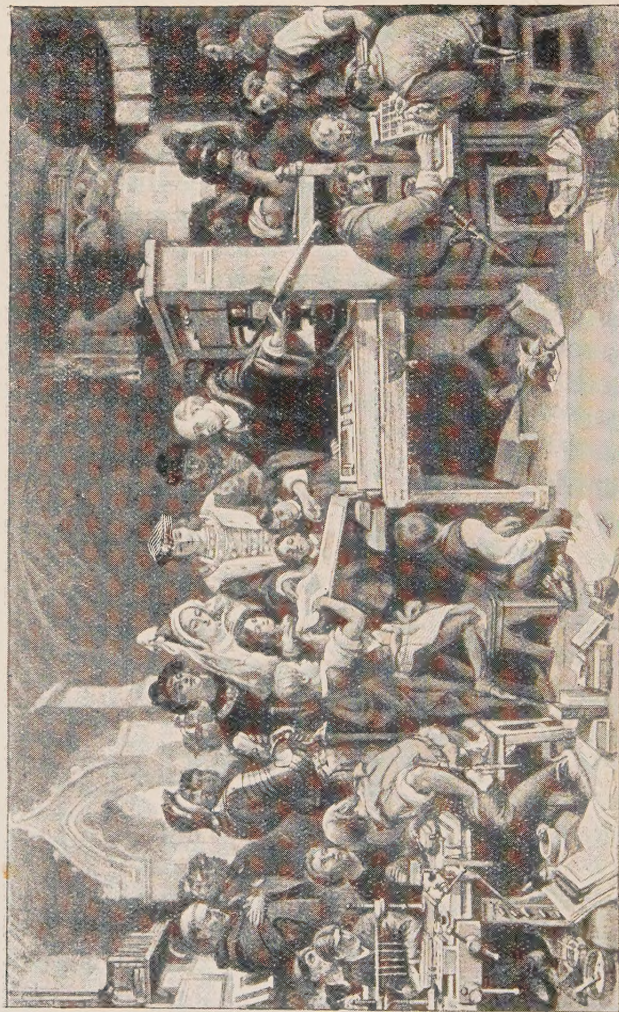


Marshall  
Biographical and Essays.









CAXTON'S PRINTING OFFICE IN THE ALMONRY AT WESTMINSTER.

*From the picture by Daniel Maclise, R.A.*

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A HISTORY OF  
ENGLISH  
LITERATURE

BY  
WILLIAM FRANCIS COLLIER, LL.D.


*New Edition, Revised, with American  
Supplement*



THOMAS NELSON AND SONS, LTD.

*London, Edinburgh, and New York*

1920



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## PREFACE.

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I GLADLY avail myself of the opportunity to pay a humble tribute to Dr. Collier's *History of English Literature*, now brought up to date and issued in a new edition. Dr. Collier's book rendered to me and to very many others an inestimable service. It helped us in early years to care for the study of English literature. This was due to various causes, but chiefly to the picturesqueness, the glow, and the energy of the author's style. We live in an era of the quiet style; but Dr. Collier was so deeply moved by the strong masters of literature that he caught something of their fire and communicated it to his young readers. Again and again I have met men now grown gray who repeat with pleasure his eloquent phrases and sentences. It is a serious error to suppose that text-books for the young should be colourless. In the young the imagination is touched easily, and Dr. Collier knew, as very few writers of literary history have known, how to touch it.

The plan of Dr. Collier's book is most excellent, though within his limits he could not fully develop it. In the first place, he made much of the really great writers. "Always in books keep the best company," wrote Sydney Smith to his son. "Don't read a line of Ovid till you have mastered Virgil, nor of Massinger till you are familiar with Shakespeare." It has been truly said that the great-

est works of our literature are also the most attractive. "No dramatist is so readable as Shakespeare ; to no works of fiction can we return again and again with greater pleasure than to the masterpieces of Fielding and Scott ; nowhere can the blood-stained story of the French Revolution be followed with keener interest than in the pages of Carlyle." Dr. Collier's plan was to give his main attention to writers of first-rate importance, while not forgetting the rest.

Again, Dr. Collier knew that interest in an author's work is greatly stimulated by a knowledge of the author's life. In fact, no author can be understood without some acquaintance with his personality, his outward environment, and his circumstances. The excellent method of Sainte-Beuve, the prince of critics, is before studying the author to study the man, thinking that "as the tree is so will be the fruit." He was of opinion that until you have asked yourself a certain number of questions about the man and answered them satisfactorily, you cannot understand him. Into a literary work the author's whole nature more or less enters. So Sainte-Beuve put such questions as these about an author : "What were his religious views ? How did the sight of nature affect him ? How was he in his dealings with women, and in his feelings respecting money ? Was he rich ? Was he poor ? What was his *regimen* ? What was the daily manner of his life ?" Dr. Collier shows an eminent skill in touching points of true saliency in the biographies of English authors.

Again, it is important to know something of the period in which authors wrote. Literary men influence their time ; but they are also influenced by their time. They cannot escape the spirit of the age in which they live. Their way of looking at things must be affected by the intellectual atmosphere by which they are surrounded.



Thus the Elizabethan writers cannot be understood without some knowledge of the great deeds of their period. The drama of the Restoration is unintelligible apart from the history of the times. As Goethe has said, "If you would understand an author, you must understand his age." Lord Morley insists on the importance of comprehending the relations between great personalities and the societies from which they have emerged. Dr. Collier has kept this constantly in view, and has largely accomplished his end without entering into elaborate detail.

It cannot be too strongly said that the teacher of English literature is successful only in so far as he interests his pupils in literature. To learn by rote a number of literary facts and dates is an achievement of very little value; but if the teacher has the warm and kindling quality which induces those who learn from him to read for the mere pleasure of reading, he has done his work. Thenceforth it is superfluous to urge the duty of reading. Reading is a delight, and the passion for books becomes as urgent as any physical craving. Dr. Collier takes the high view that the business and function of literature is to cherish within us the ideal, and so to brighten life and kindle thought. That is why he has been to so many a vivid and inspiring teacher.

W. ROBERTSON NICOLL.

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## NOTE.

IN the revision of the later chapters the original methods of Dr. Collier have been followed as far as possible, biographical sketches of the authors being given in addition to comment upon their work. But for quite modern writers, dead or living, personal matter seems scarcely so

necessary, and these chapters are mainly devoted to literary estimates. The selection of names and the proportion of space to be given to modern authors are naturally questions of some difficulty. In this respect, it has been the aim of the revisers to make the book as comprehensive as possible.

Dr. Collier's arrangement has been followed in the additional matter—that is, the chapters proceed in order of date of death, the paragraphs and supplementary lists according to date of birth. Similar principles have governed the American supplement, which contains much information not to be found in any other English text-book.

The revision of the modern chapters, and most of the additional material, has been the work of Mr. R. Brimley Johnson.

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# HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

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## THE PRE-ENGLISH ERA.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### FIRST STEPS IN BOOK-MAKING.

WHEN in the depth of some Asiatic forest, shadowy with the green fans and sword-blades of the palm tribe, a savage stood, one day long ago, etching with a thorn on some thick-fleshed leaf, torn from the shrubwood around him, rude images of the beasts he hunted or the arrows he shot, the first step was taken towards the making of a book.

Countless have been the onward steps since then ; but the old fact that the *tree* is the parent of the *book* still survives in many well-known words, which ever point us back to the green and perfumed woodland where sprang the earliest ancestor of those wondrous and innumerable compounds of author's brain, printer's ink, and linen rag, now answering to the term book. For example, take the Latin *liber*, and the English *book* and *leaf*. Who does not know that *liber* means originally the inner bark of a tree ? *Book* is merely a disguised form of the word *beech*, into which it easily changes when we tone down *k* to *ch* soft ; and what could our Saxon forefathers have

found, in the thick forests of their native Germany, better fitted for their rude inscribings than the smooth and silvery bark of that lovely tree? The word *leaf* tells its own tale. The trim squares of paper, sewed or glued together, which we call by that common name, find their earliest types in those green tablets we have spoken of, pulled fresh and sappy from the forest bough, and marked with the point of a little thorn; which, perhaps, by also pinning the sheets together, may have done the double work of pen and binding-needle.

But fading leaves were too perishable to do more than suggest the notion of a book. Some more durable material was needed to keep alive the memory of those events—battles, huntings, changes of encampment, death of chiefs—which chequered the simple life of the early world. Groves were planted, altars raised, cairns heaped up, each to tell some tale of joy or grief; but a day soon came when the descendants of the men who had raised these memorials wondered what the decaying trees, and the gray, moss-covered heaps of stones could mean—for the story had perished when the fathers of the tribe were gathered to their rest.

In some nations the earliest records were knotted cords. Strings of different colours, with knots of various sizes and variously arranged, contained the national history of the Peruvians. The Chinese and some negro tribes made use of similar cords. But it was not in man to remain contented with these imperfect means of keeping alive the memory of great events. The old book of green leaves was soon exchanged for a book of tough bark, and this for tablets of thin wood. Records which men were very anxious to preserve came to be engraven on slabs of rock or cut into plates of metal. The skins of various animals, tanned into a smooth leather, afforded to the ancients a durable substance for their documents and books. Out of this class of writing materials came the parch-



ment and the vellum, which have not yet been superseded in the lawyer's office, for no paper has been made to equal them in lasting power. Parchment takes its name from the old city of Pergamos in Asia Minor, whose king, when the literary jealousy of the Egyptians stopped the supply of papyrus, caused his subjects to write on sheep-skins, hence called *Pergamena* or parchment. Vellum, a finer material, is prepared calf-skin. Besides these, a common form of the book in Greek and Roman days consisted in tablets of wood, ivory, or metal, coated thinly with wax, on which the writer scratched the symbols of his thoughts with a bronze or iron bodkin (*γραφίον* or *stilus*). A cut reed, dipped in gum-water which was coloured with powdered charcoal or the soot of resin, represented long ago the pen and ink of modern days. With such appliances, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman scholars penned their early works on rolls of parchment or of papyrus, the famous rush-skin, which has given us a name for that common but very beautiful material on which *we* write our letters and print our books.

In swampy places by the Nile, where the retreating flood had left pools, a yard or so deep, to stagnate under the hot sky, there grew in old times vast forests of tall reeds, whose triangular stems, some six or eight feet high, bore tufted plumes of hair-like fibres. Wading in these shallows, where the ibis stalked, and the mailed crocodile crashed through the canes, day after day bands of dark, linen-robed Egyptians came to hew down the leafless woods with knife or axe, and bear their heavy sheaves to the sandy bank. It was the famous *papyrus* they cut, whose skin vied with parchment as the writing material of the ancients. The several wrappings of the papyrus stalk being stripped off, the lengths were cemented with the sugary juices of the plant itself. As skin after skin peeled away, the more delicate tissues, of which the finest paper was made, were found wrapping the heart

of the stem. Pressing and drying completed the simple process of making this much-used paper. It was then ready to receive the semi-liquid, gummy soot with which the Xenophons and the Virgils of old Greece and Rome traced their histories and poems.

Such were the chief materials of which ancient books were made, the hard and stiff substances being formed into angular tablets, which opened either like the leaves of a European book or like the folding compartments of a screen; the soft and pliable, such as leather or linen, being rolled on ornamented, smoothly-rounded sticks, as we roll up our maps and wall diagrams. Instead of showing, like our modern libraries, trim rows of books standing shoulder to shoulder with the evenness of well-drilled soldiers on parade—the juniors gleaming with magenta and gold, the seniors hoary in ancient vellum or sombre with calf—the bookroom of a Plato or a Seneca would have displayed a few circular cases, resembling our common bandbox, and filled with papyrus or parchment rolls, which, standing on end, displayed the bright yellow, polished vermilion, or deep jet of their smoothly-cut edges.

Let us now see what the men who wrought out the wonders of ancient history cut or painted on their granite slabs, their cloths of cotton or linen, their sheep-skins, or their slips of bark.

Drawing and painting were, undoubtedly, the earliest methods of conveying ideas in books. And still pictures and sketches aid many of our books and serials to convey a clearer meaning, else why do we find the most popular magazines illustrated, and an *édition de luxe* of a classic filled with noble prints? The various gradations by which the first rude sketch changed into that wonderful invention—a word formed of alphabetic symbols—cannot here be traced. Take two specimens of the phases which the growing art assumed.

A piece of cotton cloth is before us, brilliant with

crimson and yellow and pale blue, and oblong like our modern page. It is a picture-writing of old Mexico, relating the reign and conquests of King Acamapich. Down the left border runs a broad stripe of blue, divided into thirteen parts by lines resembling the rounds of a ladder. This represents a reign of thirteen years. In each compartment a symbol expresses the story of the year. A flower denoting calamity is found in two of them. But the chief story is told by the coloured forms of the centre, where we have the sovereign painted twice, as a stern-looking head, capped with a serpent crest, with a dwarfish, white-robed body, and, separate from the shoulder, a hand grasping a couple of arrows. Before this grim warrior at the top of the scroll lie a shield and a bundle of spears. Face and feet are painted a dull yellow. Before his second effigy we have four smaller heads, with closed eyes and an ominous, bloody mark upon lip and chin, denoting the capture and beheading of four hostile chiefs. The four sacked and plundered cities are depicted by roofs falling from ruined walls ; and beside each stands a symbol representing some botanical or geographical feature by which its site is characterized. Pictures of different species of tree distinguish two of the cities ; the third stands evidently by a lake, for a pan of water is drawn close to it, united by a line to mark close connection.

By some such suggestive painting upon cotton cloth or aloe leaves did the frightened Mexicans, who dwelt on the coast of the great Gulf, convey to the inland towns the terrible news that Cortez and his Spaniards had appeared. They painted the great ships, the pale, bearded men, the cannon breathing flames and smoke and hurling distant trees in splinters to the earth ; and no sadder picture was ever unrolled in the splendid palace of Montezuma than the cotton cloth emblazoned with terrible meanings, which had been borne, with galloping of swiftest mules, up the rocky terraces of the plateau from the blue edge of the sea.



The link which connects such picture-writing with that use of alphabetic symbols so familiar to us that we do not realize its wonder lies in the hieroglyphic writing of the Egyptians. Figures of natural objects abound in that system too, but they have now got a deeper meaning—the power of expressing abstractions, or qualities considered alone. Thus the queen bee represents royalty; the bull, strength; an ostrich feather, from the evenness of its filaments, truth or justice. The figures are often, especially in later writings, reduced to their principal parts, or even to lines, the latter being the first step toward the formation of an alphabet. For instance, a combat is represented by two arms, one bearing a shield, the other a pike; Upper and Lower Egypt are denoted by single stems topped with a blossom or a plume, representing respectively the lotus and the papyrus. The colouring of the hieroglyphics is not in imitation of nature, as is the case with the earlier picture-writing, but follows a conventional system seldom departed from. The upper part of a canopy in blue stood for the heavens; a thick waving line of the same, or a greenish hue, represented the sea. The sun is red, with a yellow rim. Men's flesh is red; women's, yellow. Parts of the body are painted deep red; wooden instruments are pale orange or buff; bronze utensils, green. The effect of hieroglyphic writing as it strikes the eye is very brilliant, the primary colours—red, yellow, and blue—being the prevailing hues.

A hieroglyphic painting taken from the wall of an excavated temple in Nubia is before us. It represents the introduction of ambassadors to the great Sesostris, whose figure, seated on a throne, fills all the left side of the record. He bears as sceptre a red wand with yellow top; his white robe is embroidered with blue and gold; a square blue cap, rimmed with gold and adorned with a symbolic bird, covers his head; his arms, his face, and lower legs are bare, and painted of a deep red. Two coloured ovals above his head

express by figures and signs the names of the king. Four or five upright columns of hieroglyphic symbols tell the story of the ambassadors ; and crossing two of these from the right, there comes a red arm to announce the introduction to the royal presence. To attempt a description of the symbols here would be absurd. No fewer than twenty-three figures of birds with spread or folded wings are there. The sign for water is frequently repeated. Figures of men kneel and sit and stand. There are fish, and arms and legs and eyes, crowns and flowers, a crocodile and a horse—all in red, or blue, or yellow, or green. No other colour appears in the painting, except the gray used to shade the great figure of the king.

Then by slow yet very sure degrees the hieroglyphic system altered until certain signs became *phonetic* ; that is, expressive of sounds, not things. The Phœnicians, who had much to do with early Egypt, in adopting the art of writing probably abandoned the pictorial part of the hieroglyphic system, and retaining only the phonetics, formed out of these the first pure alphabet ; and so from Phœnicia, through Greece and Rome, we, in all likelihood, got the groundwork of those twenty-six letters of which our thirty-eight thousand words are made.

Much of this opening chapter deals with countries far from Britain, and an age anterior, in the Old World at least, to the birth of British literature. But it is not a rash conjecture that, among the ancestors of those blue-limbed Celts who dashed so bravely into the surf near Sandwich on that old September day to meet the mailed legions of Cæsar, there were some rude attempts at picture-writing on such materials as the country could supply. For savage man must, in every age and clime, travel on to civilization by much the same pathway. And in any case it is well, when beginning to record the triumphs of British letters, to trace a few of those faltering steps which were taken, as the world grew from morning into prime,

towards the production of that triumph of human thought and skill we call a modern book.

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## CHAPTER II.

### CELTIC WRITERS.

AMONG every people the earliest form of literature is the Ballad. The History and the Poetry of a nation are, in their infant forms, identical. When the old Greeks taught, in their mythology, that Memory was the mother of the Muses, they embodied in a striking personification the fact that the rude language in which men emerging from savagery used to chant the story of their deeds to their children was couched in rough metre in order that the ring of the lines might help the memory to retain the tale.

Oldest of all British literature, or, indeed, of all literature in modern Europe of which any specimens remain, are some scraps of Irish verse found in the Annalists and ascribed to the fifth century. *The Psalter of Cashel*, the oldest existing manuscript of the Irish literature, is a collection of metrical legends, sung by the bards, which was compiled towards the end of the ninth century by a man who seems to have held the offices of Bishop of Cashel and King of Munster. More important, however, as giving in careful prose a calm account of early Irish history, are the *Annals of Tigernach and of the Four Masters of Ulster*.

The very scanty remains of the Scottish Gaelic are of much later date than the earliest Irish ballads. The poems of Ossian—*Fingal* and *Temora*—which were published in 1762 and 1763 by James Macpherson, as translations from Gaelic manuscripts as old as the fourth century, are now generally looked on as literary forgeries, but they were forgeries executed by a man

who was familiar with the legendary poetry of the Highlands, which had never been committed to writing. The ancient manuscripts from which he professed to have translated these graphic pictures of old Celtic life have never been produced. A narrative in verse, called the *Albanic Duan*, is thought to have been composed in the eleventh century.

In Wales, which was the stronghold of Druidism, the profession of the bard was held in high honour. The poems of Taliesin, Merlin, and other bards of the sixth century, still remain. The Welsh *Triads*, some of which are ascribed to writers of the thirteenth century, are sets of historical events and moral proverbs, arranged in groups of three. Both in these and in the ballads of the bards, one of the leading heroes is the great Prince Arthur, whose prowess against the Saxons was so noted in those dim days.

Besides those who wrote and sang in their native Celtic tongue, there were also among the ancient British people a few Latin authors. Three may be named. First on the long and brilliant roll of British historians stands Gildas, born at Alcluyd (Dumbarton) about the beginning of the sixth century. He is known to us as the author of a *History of the Britons*, and an *Epistle* to his countrymen, both in Latin, and both containing fiery assaults upon the Saxon invaders. Nennius, thought to have been a monk of Bangor, is said also to have written a *History of the Britons*. The *Latin poems* of St. Columbanus, an Irish missionary to the Gauls, are spoken of by Moore as "shining out in this twilight period of Latin literature with no ordinary distinction."

Celtic literature, properly speaking, is not English, for it is written in a tongue which has few affinities with the language of Shakespeare. But as an influence on English literature it must be ranked high. Of late years we have seen an extraordinary revival both in Scotland and Ireland of Celtic scholarship, and the elucidation and republication of old song and story

cycles has produced many original works inspired by the same spirit. To-day in Ireland, for example, we find verse whose aim is a conscious return to the inspiration of the sixth century.

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## CHAPTER III.

### SAXON WRITERS.

THE *Gleeman* or Minstrel of the Saxons was a person of importance. When the evening shadows fell, and the "mead-bench" was filled, his scene of triumph came. His touch on the "wood of joy" had power alike to rouse and soothe the fiery passions of the warriors. He related the deeds of dead heroes, or sung the praise of their living descendants; stung the coward with his scorn, or exulted in pride over the beaten foe. From earliest days his training was directed to the storing of his memory with the poetic legends of his country; and when, grown more skilful, he learned to string into rude verses the story of his own day, it went, without his name to mark it, into the common stock of his craft. Hence the Saxon poetry is anonymous.

The structure of the verse in which these gleemen sang is thus described by Wright: "The poetry of the Saxons was neither modulated according to foot-measure, like that of the Greeks and Romans, nor written with rhymes, like that of many modern languages. Its chief and universal characteristic was a very regular *alliteration*, so arranged that in every couplet there should be two principal words in the first line beginning with the same letter, which letter must also be the initial of the first word on which the stress of the voice falls in the second line. The only approach to a metrical system yet discovered is that two risings and two fallings of the voice seem



necessary to each perfect line. Two distinct measures are met with, a shorter and a longer, both commonly mixed together in the same poem ; the former being used for the ordinary narrative, and the latter adopted when the poet sought after greater dignity. In the manuscripts the Saxon poetry is always written continuously, like prose ; but the division of the lines is generally marked by a point."

The chief Saxon poems that have come down to us are the *Romance of Beowulf* and *Caedmon's Paraphrase*.

*Beowulf* is a nameless poem of more than six thousand lines, thought to be much older than the manuscript of it which we possess. Its hero, BEOWULF, is a Danish soldier, who, passing through many dangers by land and sea, slays a monster, Grendel, but is himself slain in an attack upon a huge dragon. It is a striking picture of dim Gothic days, much heightened in effect by the realistic minuteness of its description. As we read, the gleaming of mail flashes in our eyes, and we hear the clanging march of the warriors, as the "bright ring-iron sings in its trappings." Metaphors are common in the language of *Beowulf*, and some are of noble simplicity, such as, "They lay aloft, put to sleep with swords ;" but in all this long poem there are only five similes. This scarcity of similes is a characteristic of all Saxon verse.

CAEDMON, the author of the *Paraphrase*, was originally a cowherd near Whitby in Northumbria. Bede tells the story of his inspiration. It was the custom in those days for each to sing in turn, as the harp was pushed round the hall at supper. This Caedmon could never do ; and when he saw his turn coming, he used to slip out of the room, blushing for his want of skill and eager to hide his shame. One night, having left the hall, he lay down to sleep in the stable ; and as he slept he dreamed that a stranger came to him and said, "Caedmon, sing me something." "I know nothing to sing," said the poor herd, "and so I had to slink away out of the hall." "Nay," said

the stranger, "but thou hast something to sing." "What must I sing?" "Sing the Creation," replied the stranger; upon which words of sweet music began to flow from the lips that had been sealed so long. Caedmon awoke, knew the words he had been reciting, and felt a new-born power in his breast. The mantle of song had fallen on him; and when next day, before the Abbess Hilda and some of the scholars of the place, he told what had occurred, they gave him a passage of the Bible to test his new-found skill. Within a few hours he composed, on the given subject, a poem of surpassing sweetness and power. Thenceforward this monk of Whitby spent his life in the composition of religious poetry.

The *Paraphrase* of Caedmon contained, besides other portions of the Bible, the story of the Creation and the Fall, the history of Daniel, with many passages in the life and death of our Saviour. From the similarity of subject, a likeness has been traced between him and Milton, upon which a charge of plagiarism against our great epic poet has been most foolishly grounded.

It is believed that Caedmon died about 680. Some think that there were two poets of the name, the elder of whom composed those lines on the Creation, which are acknowledged to be among the oldest existing specimens of Saxon, while the younger was the author of the *Paraphrase*.

The principal fragmentary Saxon poems which still survive are the *Battle of Finsborough*; the *Traveller's Song*, which contains a good many geographical names; and the fragment of *Judith*. In the *Saxon Chronicle* of 938 we find a poem called *Athelstan's Song of Victory*.

The following extract from Caedmon's *Paraphrase*—part of the Song of Azariah—may be taken as a specimen of Saxon verse:—

*Thorpe's Translation.*

Tha of roderum wæs,  
Engel ælbeorht.  
Ufan onsended.

Then from the firmament was  
An all-bright angel  
Sent from above,

Wlute scyne wer.  
 On his wuldor-haman.  
 Se him cwom to frofre.  
 & to feorh nere.  
 Mid lufan & mid lisse.  
 Se thone lig tosceaf.  
 Halig and heofon-beorht.  
 Hatan fyres.  
 Tosweop hine & toswende.  
 Thurh tha swithan miht.  
 Ligges leoma.  
 That hyra lice ne wæs.  
 Owiht geegled.

A man of beauteous form,  
 In his garb of glory :  
 Who to them came for comfort,  
 And for their lives' salvation,  
 With love and with grace ;  
 Who the flame scattered  
 (Holy and heaven-bright)  
 Of the hot fire,  
 Swept it and dashed away,  
 Through his great might,  
 The beams of flame ;  
 So that their bodies were not  
 Injured aught.

## SAXON PROSE.

ALFRED.—King Alfred is the leading writer of Saxon prose whose works remain to us. The Welshman Asser has preserved for us an account of this royal scholar's life and writings.

What Alfred did for England in those dark days, when Danish pirates ravaged the land so sorely, every reader of our history knows. Here it is not as the warrior, victorious at Ethandune and on the banks of the Lea, that we must view this greatest of the Saxons ; but as the peaceful man of letters, sitting among his books and plying his patient pen, as his time-candle burns down, ring after ring, through the hours allotted to literary toil. Both sword and pen were familiar tools in that cunning right hand.

Alfred the Great was born in 849 at Wantage in Berkshire. Two visits to Rome in his early days gave him a wider range of observation and thought than Saxon children commonly enjoyed. When he had reached his twelfth year he won as a prize a beautiful book of poetry, which his mother had promised to that one of her sons who should first commit its contents to memory. Already Alfred had been noted in the family circle for the ease with which he remembered the songs sung by the wandering gleemen.

When in 871 he ascended the throne of Wessex, his great mind found its destined work. Through many perils and disheartening changes he broke the power

of the Danes, taming the pirates into tillers of the Danelagh. And then, his warlike task for the present done, he turned to the elevation of the mind and character of his people.

There being few scholars in the troubled land, he invited learned men from France to preside over the leading schools. Much of his scanty leisure was spent in literary work, chiefly translations into Saxon. His chief works were his versions of *Bede's History of the Saxon Church*, and *Boethius on the Consolation of Philosophy*. Translations of *Orosius*, of *Pope Gregory's Pastorale*, and an unfinished rendering of the *Psalms* are also named among his contributions to literature.

ALFRIC.—There was an author in the latter days of the Saxon period, known as Alfric the Grammarian, about whom much confusion exists among writers on the Saxon literature. Whoever this man was—whether, as is generally thought, that monk of Abingdon who was made Archbishop of Canterbury in 995, or another man of York, or yet another of Malmesbury—he contributed largely to the literature of his day. Most of his writings are still extant. His name, the Grammarian, was taken from a *Latin Grammar*, which he translated from Donatus and Priscian. His *Latin Glossary* and *Book of Latin Conversation* are works of merit. But his *Eighty Homilies*, written in the simplest Saxon, for the use of the common people, are undoubtedly his greatest work. Among these is his famous *Paschal Sermon*, which embodies the Saxon belief on the subject of the Lord's Supper. Alfric of Canterbury died in November 1006.

The famous *Saxon Chronicle* was the work of centuries. An Archbishop of Canterbury, named Plegmund, drawing largely from Bede, is said to have compiled the work up to 891. It was then carried on in various monasteries until 1154, when the registers ceased to be kept. As a work of history, embracing the events of many hundred years, and written for the most part by men who lived in the midst of the

scenes they described, it is perhaps the most valuable inheritance we have received from the native literature of our Saxon forefathers.

A romance founded on the story of Apollonius of Tyre—King Alfred's Will—some Laws and Charters—some Homilies—and a few works on Grammar, Medicine, and Botany—are nearly all the other specimens of Saxon prose that remain.

## LATIN WORKS.

The learned tongue of Europe was then, as it long continued to be, Latin, the writing of which was revived in England by Augustine and his monks. In the stern soldiering days of the Roman period, much Latin had been spoken and read, but little had been written within British bounds. But the Saxon monks—nay, the Saxon ladies—wrote countless pages of Latin prose and verse. The great subject of these Latin works was theology, as was natural from the circumstances that they were chiefly the productions of the cloister.

ALDHELM.—Most ancient of the Saxon writers in Latin was Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury and Bishop of Sherborn. He was born in Wessex about 640, of the best blood in the land. His chief teacher was an Irish monk named Meildulf, who lived a hermit life under the shade of the great oak trees in north-eastern Wiltshire. When the followers of Meildulf were formed into a monastery bearing its founder's name (Meildulfesbyrig or Malmesbury), Aldhelm was chosen to be their abbot. There he lived a peaceful life, relieving his graver cares with the sweet solace of literature and music. He died at Dilton in May 709. His chief works are three—a prose treatise in praise of *Virginity*, a work in verse on the same subject, and a book of *Riddles*. His Latin is impure, filled with Greek words, and stuffed with those alliterations and metaphors which are characteristic of Saxon poetry.

BEDE.—Second in time, but first in place, comes the



name of the Venerable Bede, or Beda. This illustrious man was born about 672 or 673, at Jarrow in Durham, near the mouth of the Tyne. To the newly founded monastery of Wearmouth, not far distant, the studious boy went at the age of seven, to profit by the teaching of Benedict. Thenceforward—until his death fifty-six years later—the cloisters of Wearmouth were his home ; and within their quiet seclusion he wrote the great work on which his title to the name Venerable is justly founded. In his fifty-ninth year he brought to a close his famous *History of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, written—like nearly all his works—in Latin. Its style is simple and easy, unsullied by the far-fetched figures which are such favourites with Aldhelm. From it we learn nearly all we know of the early history of the Saxons and their Church. At the end of this book Bede gives a list of thirty-eight works, which he had already written or compiled. These are chiefly theological ; but there are, besides, among them histories, poems, works on physical science, and works on grammar.

Cuthbert, one of Bede's disciples, gives us a sketch of his dying bed. From the beginning of April until the end of May 735, he continued to sink under an attack of asthma, which had long been sapping his strength. To the very last he worked hard, dictating with his failing breath a translation into Saxon of John's Gospel. It was morning on the 26th of May. "Master," said one of the young monks who wrote for him, "there is but one chapter, but thou canst 735 ill bear questioning." "Write quickly on," A.D. said Bede. At noon he took a solemn farewell of his friends, distributing among them his treasured spices and other gifts. By sunset there remained but one sentence of the work to do, and scarcely had the concluding words of the Gospel flowed from the pen of the writer, when the venerable monk sighed out, "It is done." The thread was just about to snap. Seated on that part of the floor where

he had been wont to kneel in prayer, he pronounced the "Gloria Patri," and died as the last words of the sacred utterance were breathed from his lips.

ALCUIN.—The year 735, which sealed the eyes of Bede in death, is thought to have given life to the great scholar Alcuin. It is doubtful whether Alcuin was born at York or in Scotland. He won a prominent place in the great school presided over at York by Archbishop Egbert, and when he was called to fill the chair—from which his master, Egbert, had taught so well—he drew even greater crowds of students to this capital of the north. Besides his work as a teacher, he acted as keeper of the fine library collected in the Cathedral of York. While returning from a visit to Rome, he became acquainted at Parma with the Emperor Charlemagne, who invited him to France. Going thither in 782, he speedily became one of the most cherished friends of his imperial patron, who was never happier than when he was chatting and laughing unreservedly with men of thought. After a short visit to England (790–792) in the character of Imperial Envoy, Alcuin seems to have settled permanently in France. There his position was a proud one, for he was recognized as chief among the distinguished group of wits and lettered men who encircled the throne of Charlemagne. The name by which he was known in this brilliant circle was Flaccus Albinus, a title under which he could converse more freely with his friend David (Charlemagne) than if the monk and the emperor always retained their distinctive names and titles. In his old age Alcuin desired earnestly to retire from the glare and bustle of court life to that quiet monastery round which his earliest associations were twined. He had all ready for the journey, when news came of terrible massacres and burnings in the north of England, such as had not before been suffered, although the Raven's beak had left many a deep and bloody gash upon the fair English shore. Frightened at such tales, he asked from the emperor a post, in

which he might calmly pass the evening of his days. The Abbey of Tours, falling vacant just then, became his place of retirement, where he spent his learned leisure in training a new generation of scholars, and in writing most of those books by which his name has come down to us. At Tours he died in 804.

The Letters of Alcuin give a lifelike picture of the great events of his day. The wars of Charlemagne against the Saracens and the Saxons are there described; and there, too, we find a graphic account of the inner life of the imperial court. A *Life of Charlemagne* has been ascribed to the pen of Alcuin; but, if there was ever such a work, it has long been lost. Of his poems, the best is an *Elegy on the Destruction of Lindisfarne by the Danes*. He wrote, besides, a long metrical narrative of the bishops and saints of the Church at York; which, on the whole, is not very elegant Latin, and poor enough poetry. Theology, of course, was his principal study; and on this theme he wrote much, pouring from his pen a host of Scriptural commentaries and treatises on knotty points of doctrine. As a teacher he ranks much higher than he ranks as an author. His chief glory—and the thing of which his countrymen were especially proud—was the fact that he, a Briton, had been chosen to give instruction to the great Emperor of the West.

ERIGENA.—John Scotus or Erigena, although not a Saxon, but, as his name shows, an Irishman, claims our special notice here. Little is known of this great man. He probably settled in France about 845, and lived there, under the patronage of Charles the Bald, for thirty years. He should be well remembered for two things: he was a learned layman, and a well-read Greek scholar, both characters rare in those days. His chief works are a treatise on *Predestination*, in which he argues that God has foreordained only rewards for the good, and that man has brought evil on himself by the exercise of his own perverted will; a treatise on the *Eucharist*, denying the doctrine of

transubstantiation ; and—more remarkable than either—a book *On the Division of Nature*, which embraces a wide range of scientific knowledge, and is copiously enriched with extracts from Greek and Latin writers.

The bold, fearless nature of the man, and the familiar tone of the Frankish court life, are well illustrated by an anecdote told of Erigena. One day the king and he sat on opposite sides of the table, with the courtiers ranged around. The scholar—through forgetfulness or ignorance—transgressed some of the rules of etiquette, so as to offend the fastidious taste of those who sat by, upon which the king asked him what was the difference between a Scot \* and a sot. “Just the breadth of the table,” said Erigena ; and the royal witling ventured on no more puns, for that day at least, at the scholar’s expense. Erigena is said to have died in France some time previous to the year 880.

DUNSTAN.—One of the foremost Saxons of his day, though more noted for his learning than for his writings, was Dunstan, Abbot of Glastonbury, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Born in 924, near Glastonbury in Somersetshire, and educated there in the Irish school, he became a monk at an early age. His advances in learning were surprisingly rapid, in spite of the convulsive fits to which he was subject, and under the influence of which he thought that he was hunted by devils. Arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music, were his favourite studies. While living at Winchester, he was persuaded by his uncle the bishop to crush down his early love for a girl of great beauty, and to devote himself to the austerities of a monkish life. Beside the church wall he built a cell, into which he shut himself with his tools of carpentry and smith-work, his paints and brushes for the illumination of manuscripts. Seldom venturing from this retreat, he soon won a reputation for wonderful sanctity and alliance with supernatural beings.

\* A Scot then meant a native of Ireland.

King Edmund made him Abbot of Glastonbury ; and with Edred also—the next king—he was in high favour. Banished by Edwy to Ghent, he was by Edgar recalled to become Archbishop of Canterbury. Thenceforward he was first man in the English realm, able not merely to rebuke the king, but even to bestow the crown at his pleasure. He died in 988.

His works are nearly all theological, the best known being the *Benedictine Rule*, modified for English monks, and having its Latin interlined with a Saxon translation. He wrote also a *Commentary, or Set of Lectures on the Rule* ; which were probably read by him in the various schools with which he was connected.

The latter days of Saxon literature were feeble compared with the vigour of its youth. Even in the day of Alfred, when it may be said to have reached its prime, decay was at work, and the ravages of the Danes completed the blight of its promise. Those were days when many kings made their mark at the foot of charters, for want of skill to write their names. Alfred could find no tutors able to teach the higher branches of education ; and he was forced to state publicly, in his preface to *Gregory's Pastoral*, that he knew no men south of the Thames, and few south of the Humber, who could follow the sense of the public prayers, or construe a Latin sentence into English. Yet that Saxon literature—however scanty—*did* flourish, is no slight wonder, for during those ages clouds of thickest darkness hung over all Europe with a seemingly impenetrable gloom.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### ANGLO-NORMAN WRITERS.

THE Norman Conquest wrought great changes on both the learning and the literature of England. Saxon scholarship had been growing rustier ever since the





THE LAST CHAPTER.

*From the picture by J. Doyle Penrose.  
(By permission of the Autotype Co.)*



great Alfred died ; and those Saxon prelates who held sees at the time of the Conquest were far behind the age as men of letters. William therefore displaced many of them, to make room for polished scholars from the Continent—such as Lanfranc and Anselm, who held the see of Canterbury in succession. The Conqueror, moreover, founded many fine abbeys and convents, within whose quiet cells learned men could think and write in safe and honoured leisure. Schools sprang up on every side. The great seminaries at Oxford and Cambridge—already distinguished as schools—were elevated to the rank of universities, destined to be formidable rivals of the older institutions at Paris and Bologna. Latin being the professional language of churchmen, by whom in those days nearly all learning was monopolized, we find a vast number of Latin works written during the centuries which immediately followed the Norman Conquest.

At this time what is called the Scholastic Philosophy, founded on Aristotle's method of argument, grew to an extravagant degree of favour. Hence imaginative writing of all kinds suffered a blight. It was only in the ballads of the people that fancy found utterance at all.

John of Salisbury, who, going to Paris in 1136, spent several years in attending the lectures of the best masters there, wrote a book called *Metalogicus*, exposing the absurd and childish wrangling which then bore the dignified name of Logic. Such questions as the following were seriously discussed in learned assemblies : “ If a man buy a cloak, does he also buy the hood ? ” and, “ If a hog be carried to market with a rope tied round its neck and held at the other end by a man, is the animal carried to market by the man or by the rope ? ” John of Salisbury's chief work was called *Polycraticus*, a pleasant and learned treatise upon the “ Frivolities of Courtiers, and the Footsteps of Philosophers.” This accomplished monk died in 1180, being then Bishop of Chartres.

The great feature in the literary history of this time was the introduction into England of the Norman Romance. With Chivalry, from which it was inseparable, and from whose stirring life it took all its colours, the Romance rose and fell.

From the corrupted Latin a group of dialects arose, called the Roman or Romance tongues ; which, owing to slight intermixture with the barbarous languages, assumed somewhat different forms in Italy, France, and Spain. In France two dialects of the Romance language were spoken, distinguished in name by the peculiar words used for our "yes"—*oc* (*hoc*), and *oyl*, *oy*, or *oui* (probably *illud*). The language of *oc* was spoken in the south, and the language of *oyl* in the north of France. The Langue d'Oc, otherwise known as the Provençal, which was used by the famous Troubadours, flourished for a brief day of glory, was then trampled down with all its lovely flowers of song by Montfort and his crusaders, and now exists merely as the *patois* of the province that bears its name. The Langue d'Oyl, growing into the modern French, has influenced our literature in more ways than one. The lays, sung by the *trouvères* of northern France in praise of knights and knighthood, were the delight of the Norman soldiers who fought at Hastings ; and when these soldiers had settled as conquerors on the English soil, what was more natural than that they should still love the old Norman lays, and that a new generation of poets should learn in the Normanized island to sing in Norman too ?

It is no wonder that the list of Saxon writers, during the time when the nation lay stunned by the Conqueror's sword, should be short. The Saxons were then slaves, and slaves never have any literature worth speaking of. Some romances and chronicles, echoes of the lays sung by their Norman masters, were all that remained to show that the Saxon tongue was living. Yet living it was, with a wealth of life pent up in its hidden root, which was destined at no very

distant day to clothe the shorn stem with leafage and bloom.

## LATIN WRITERS.

Let us first glance at the Latin writers of the Norman times. As has been already said, Latin was the language of churchmen, the most honoured class in the nation ; and therefore the amount of Latin writing, both in prose and verse, was very great. Sermons were often preached in Latin.

JOSEPH OF EXETER.—Josephus Iscanus, or Joseph of Exeter, was the leading Latin poet of this day. His chief works were two epic poems—one on the *Trojan War*, remarkable for its pure and harmonious Latin ; the other, now almost altogether lost, called *Antiocheis*, a story of the third Crusade. Walter Mapes, or Map, Archdeacon of Oxford, also wrote Latin verses, but of quite a different stamp. A well-known part of his satirical work is a drinking-song in rhyming Latin, called the *Confession of Goliath*, which was directed chiefly against the Church and the clergy.

The chief use of Latin at this time was in the compilation of the Chronicles or historical records. We owe much to the patient monks, whose pens traced page after page of these old books. There is, indeed, nothing like fine writing in any of these chronicles ; and in many of them fiction mixes inextricably with true history like tares in the wheat-field. Yet much good sound truth has been extracted from the old chronicles ; and from such legends as Arthur, Lear, and Cymbeline some of the finest fruits of our literature have sprung.

INGULPHUS.—A history of the Abbey of Croyland, or Crowland, in Lincolnshire, extending from 664 to 1091, is said to have been written by Ingulphus, who was abbot there for twenty-three years (1086–1109). But it is doubtful whether or not this was really the work of Ingulphus ; and certainly it must not be



taken as a trustworthy record of passing events, for it is full of false and improbable statements.

ORDERICUS VITALIS.—This monk, who was born in 1075 at the village of Atcham on the Severn, and spent all his life, after his eleventh year, abroad, was the writer of an ecclesiastical history, extending from the Creation to the year 1141. His account of the Norman Conquest is minute; and that part of his history narrating the events of the first four years of the Conqueror's reign (1066–1070) is much prized.

WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY.—The name of William of Malmesbury, born about 1095, is remarkable among the many chroniclers of this period. His *History of the English Kings*, in five books, extends from the landing of the Saxons to 1128; and then three other books, called *Historia Novella*, are added, carrying the story down to 1142. As a historian, he excels in what is, comparatively speaking, careful writing, and a more exact balancing of facts than was common with the monkish chroniclers of the day. But his pages, too, abound in stories of miracles and prodigies, reflecting the "all-digestive" superstition of the time, from which the wisest heads were not free.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH.—This learned Welsh monk, who died in 1154, is noted for having preserved the fine legends of the Celtic race in his *History of Britain*, which he professed to have translated from an old Welsh chronicle. Here we find the story of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, upon which many noble works of our literature have been composed. The charm of such a book must necessarily be fatal to its value as a history; for the writer, letting his fancy play upon the adornment of these dim legends, mixes fact with fiction in a confusion that cannot be disentangled.

Gerald de Barri (Giraldus Cambrensis), Henry of Huntingdon, Roger of Hoveden, and Benedict, Abbot of Peterborough, may also be named among the crowd

of chroniclers who have written on the early history of England.

A favourite kind of light reading, often conned by the refectory fire in the long winter nights, was an *olla podrida* of stories, gathered from every possible source and done into Latin by unknown hands. These books, called *Gesta*, were made up of monkish legends, chivalric romances, ghost stories, parables, satirical flings at the foibles of women, and such stories from the classics as the Skeleton of Pallas and the Leap of Curtius. The chief reason why they are worthy of our notice here is that Shakespeare, Scott, and other great wizards of the fancy, drawing some of these dim old stories from their dusty sleep, have touched them with the wand of genius, and turned the lumps of dull lead into jewels of the finest gold.

#### NORMAN-FRENCH WRITERS.

When the chase was over, and the Norman lords caroused in their English halls around the oak board, flinging scraps of the feast to the hounds that couched on the rush-strewn floor, the lays of the French *trouvères* were sung by wandering minstrels, who were always warmly welcomed and often richly paid. Many poets of English birth soon took up this foreign strain, and wrote lays in Norman-French. The deeds of Alexander, Charlemagne, Havelok the Dane, Guy of Warwick, Cœur de Lion, and other such heroes, were celebrated in these romances. In the earlier stories there is more probability; but by degrees what critics call the "machinery" of the poem becomes wild and fanciful, borrowing largely from the weird superstitions of the North and the East. As we read, knights and ladies, grim giants dwelling in enchanted castles, misshapen dwarfs, fairies kindly and malevolent, dragons and earthdrakes, magicians with their potent wands, pass before us in a highly-coloured, much-distorted panorama.

The romances relating to King Arthur possess a special interest for us, since Tennyson and Morris have founded poems on these old tales. The strange legend of the San Grail is mixed up throughout with the story of Arthur and his Knights. The Grail was said to be the dish from which our Saviour partook of the Last Supper. It was then taken, according to the legend, by Joseph of Arimathea, who used it to catch the blood flowing from the wounds of the Saviour. Too sacred for human gaze, it became invisible, and only revealed itself in visions to the pure knight Sir Galahad, who, having seen it, prayed for death. The names of Merlin the enchanter, the false knight Lancelot, and others, familiar to the thousands who have read the *Idylls of the King*, constantly occur in the romances of Arthur. As has been already stated, the chronicler Geoffrey of Monmouth, who drew his materials from ancient Welsh and Breton songs, is the chief authority that we find for these tales.

WACE.—The best known of the Norman-French poets is Master Wace, as he calls himself, who was born probably at Jersey about 1112. He was educated at Caen, and there he spent nearly all his life. His chief poems are two—*Brut* \* *d'Angleterre*, and *Roman de Rou*. The former, a translation into eight-syllabled romance verse of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of Britain*, contains nearly eighteen hundred lines; the latter, the *Romance of Rollo*, written partly in the same verse, narrates the history of the Dukes of Normandy from Rollo to the sixteenth year of Henry the Second. The central picture of this poem is the minute account of the battle of Hastings. Wace, who became Canon of Bayeux on the recommendation of Henry the Second, is thought to have died in England about 1170.

\* The word *Brut* is said to be derived either from the name of Brutus, great-grandson of Æneas, whom tradition makes the first king of Britain, or from the old word *brud* (a rumour or history), from which has come our *brut*.

There are two among the Anglo-Norman romancers who are worthy to be named besides, not so much for the excellence of their verse as for their prominence in English history—Cardinal Stephen Langton, and Richard Cœur de Lion. In the British Museum there is a manuscript sermon of Langton's, in the middle of which he breaks into a pretty French song about "la bele Aliz," the fair Alice, and then turns the story of this lady and the flowers she has been plucking in a garden into an allegoric eulogy of the Virgin Mary.

Richard the First is said to have composed several military poems called *Sirventes*, in addition to a complaint addressed from his dungeon to the barons of France and England, bewailing his long captivity. Of this latter poem Horace Walpole printed, in his *Royal and Noble Authors*, a Provençal form, which he took from a manuscript in the library of San Lorenzo at Florence.

#### SEMI-SAXON WRITERS.

As was natural from the miserable state of the Saxon nation immediately after the Conquest—the braver spirits forced, like Hereward and Robin Hood, to take to the greenwood and the marshes, while the weaker souls were cowed into tame submission and slavery—the works written in English of the second stage were very few. The *Saxon Chronicle*, already noticed, runs on to the year 1154, when the registers come to an abrupt stop.

Two works are named as the chief remains of the Semi-Saxon literature. One, a *Translation of Wace's "Brut,"* by Layamon, a priest of Ernleye (Areleye-Regis), near the Severn, in Worcestershire, is placed by Hallam between the years 1155 and 1200. It rises in many passages beyond a mere translation of Wace's text, and runs to more than fourteen thousand long verses. Its language is said to be a western dialect of the Semi-Saxon. The *Ormulum*, so called

from its writer, Ormin or Orm, is a metrical paraphrase of Scripture, which has been assigned to the second stage of the language. Dr. Craik, however, suggests that it probably belongs to the end of the thirteenth century. The language of the *Ormulum* is, beyond question, in a more advanced stage than that of Layamon's *Brut*.

# FIRST ERA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

FROM THE BIRTH OF CHAUCER ABOUT 1340 A.D.  
TO THE INTRODUCTION OF PRINTING BY  
CAXTON IN 1476 A.D.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE MINSTREL AND THE MONK.

THE literature of England, as indeed of all Europe, lay during the earlier and central periods of the Middle Ages in the hands of the Minstrels and the Monks. The minstrel, roaming through the land, sang ballads of love and war; the monk sat in his dim-lit cell penning tomes of unreadable theology, very useless logic, or dry but valuable history, and varying these sterner labours with the task of copying and illuminating the manuscripts which then held the place of our printed volumes. There was no love lost between the brotherhoods of the Harp and the Missal; for the minstrel wielded a weapon in his song which often dealt monkery sly and terrible blows, and could, moreover, open wide the purses of rich nobles, whose coins were doled out with niggard hand to the Church. So it happened that the cloister doors were too often shut in the faces of the wearied gleemen; and grumbling Brother Ambrose, having shot the bolt, betook himself in wrath to his cell to write a Latin treatise, as ponderous as himself, against the abominations of minstrelsy and minstrels.



In very early days the Bards and Scalds of northern Europe sang their own verses to the music of the harp, much as the Homeric poets used to sing by the shore of the Ægean. The minstrels of later days recited sometimes their own compositions, but oftener the poems of others. And by no means ignoble was the occupation of these musical wanderers. When Alfred donned the minstrel's dress, he took a downward step, to be sure, but by no means so great a downward step as the Emperor of Germany would take, if he laid aside the imperial purple for the robes of a first tenor in the Italian Opera. And when Alfred walked among the tents of Guthrum's camp, a servant bore his harp behind him—a thing which would have at once revealed the secret of the singer if it had not been a very usual occurrence. Gleeman and Jogeler (our juggler; the French, *jongleur*; the Latin, *joculator*) were other names for the minstrel craft in old English days.

Nor was there any more honoured or more welcome guest than this wanderer, whose time of triumph came when the rough supper had vanished before the hungry hunters and their dogs, and the cups of mead or wine began to circle round the hall. The scene has been described by Scott in the Introduction to the sixth canto of *Marmion*, and by Kingsley in *Hereward the Wake*. Mimicry and action accompanied the music and the song. And as the wine fumes mounted to the brain, and the wild torrent of melody drove their pulses into madder flow, the battle-day seemed to have come again. War-cries rang through the smoky hall; and in the ruddy light, which streamed from crackling logs or flaring pine-knots, flushed brows grew a darker red; and hands, veined as if with whip-cord, clutched fiercely at knife or bill-hook, and wheeled the weapon in flashing circles through the air. Love, too, was the minstrel's theme; and here the power of his song struck even deeper to those simple hearts than when he

sang of war, although the eye gleamed with another light, and the stern war-shout faded into gentler tones.

The minstrels in feudal times were probably divided into various classes, which were distinguished as Squire minstrels, Yeoman minstrels, etc. Those attached to noble houses wore the arms of their patron, hung round the neck by a silver chain. The distinctive badge of the profession was the *wrest* or tuning-key. Many minstrels carried a tabor; but some played on a *viele*, supposed to have been like a guitar, in the top of which one hand turned a handle, while the other touched the keys of the instrument. The minstrel's dress, of which an idea may be gathered from the following passage, bore some resemblance to that of the monks.

An old letter, written by a man who was present at the grand entertainment given at Kenilworth in 1575 to Queen Elizabeth, describes the dress of a minstrel who took a prominent part in the pageant. He was dressed in a long gown of Kendal green, with sleeves hanging down to the middle of the leg; a red belt girt his waist; his tonsure, like a monk's, was shaven round; his head was bare; a red ribbon hung round his neck; his shoes were cleanly blacked with soot; all his ruffs (this fashion belonged to Elizabeth's own day) stuck stiffly out with the setting-sticks which then did the work of starch; and round his neck were suspended the arms of Islington. Although this depicts the minstrel at a later stage than that of which we write, when the profession had fallen low in public esteem, it may yet serve to give us an idea of the kind of men who wandered from hall to hall, embalming in song those picturesque old histories of early English days whose very roughness of flow is a new charm, and whose large admixture of highly-coloured fable, if detracting from their historic worth, yet endeared them all the more to the hearts of the simple people, whose delight it was to

sing and hear them by the winter fire or beneath the summer trees.

The application of the word *Minstrel* changed a good deal during the decay of chivalry. At first used to denote those wandering historians of whom we have spoken, "abstracts and brief chronicles of the time," who sang of love or war in lordly halls, playing a musical accompaniment and gesturing with imitative motions, it came to apply afterwards chiefly to the musician. The song was dropped, and so were the gestures. The Poet took up the song; the Juggler and Tumbler took up the bodily movements; while the Minstrel remained a player of music only. An Act of 1597, by which Elizabeth included wandering minstrels among rogues, vagabonds, and beggars, gave a mortal wound to the minstrel craft. Cromwell, too, denounced terrible penalties against fiddlers or minstrels. So low had the brotherhood of Homer fallen! In more enlightened days the poet and the musician have found once more something like their fitting station in society; but the tumbler, representing the mere physical element of the old minstrel craft, still remains outside the pale of class, but a step or two above the point where Elizabeth and Cromwell left the poor degraded minstrels.

MINSTRELSY.—The poetry of the Saxons was distinguished from their prose by a peculiar kind of *alliteration*. Metre or rhyme they had none. These attributes of English verse were imported from the Continent by the Normans, who copied both from the decayed Latin. Even before the age of Constantine a species of rhythmical poetry, in which the metrical quantity of syllables was almost wholly disregarded, and the accent alone attended to in pronunciation, became common, especially in the mouths of the lower classes of those that spoke Latin. In this rhythmical verse the number of syllables was irregular. It is certain that rhyme was used in Latin poetry from the end of the fourth century.

No work in which rhyme or metre was used can be traced in our literature until after the Norman Conquest. A few lines in the *Saxon Chronicle* on the death of the Conqueror, and a short canticle, said by Matthew Paris to have been dictated by the Virgin Mary to a hermit of Durham, are perhaps the earliest specimens of rhyme in English verse. Through Layamon's poem, written in the time of Henry the Second, numbers of short verses are scattered which rhyme together pretty exactly. There are, besides, some eight-syllable lines in imitation of Wace's metre. But, on the whole, the *Brut* is, like old Saxon verse, without either metre or rhyme. Then comes a gap of a century, during which no maker of English rhymes appeared, at least so far as we know. Metrical romances in Latin and French were plentiful enough, and on them all the literary talent of the time was spent; for the one tongue was the speech of courtiers, and the other that of churchmen. The English, thoroughly out of fashion, was left in its fall to the serfs and boors of the land.

But a day came, about the opening of the thirteenth century, when the enslaved speech began to raise its diminished head and assert its native power, and then metrical romances were written in an English form. These first faltering steps of an infant literature were nearly all translations from the French romances, some of which have been already noticed.

Tyrwhitt says: "I am inclined to believe that we have no English romance prior to the age of Chaucer which is not a translation or imitation of some earlier French romance."

The story-books, called *Gesta*, whose anecdotes were the delight of the cloister, and often lent a charm to the teachings of the pulpit, were the grand store-houses from which the romancers drew the material of their tales.

A monk named Robert of Gloucester, whose known life is summed up in the single fact that he lived

in the abbey of that city, wrote, after 1278, a *Rhyming Chronicle* in English, narrating British history to the end of Henry the Third's reign. The earlier part of this work, which seems to be written in west country English, and is printed in lines of fourteen syllables, is a free translation from Geoffrey of Monmouth. Warton condemns it as "totally destitute of art or imagination."

Robert Mannyng, or Robert de Brunne, born at Bourne, in Lincolnshire, writing half a century later, also produced a *Rhyming Chronicle*, translated from the French of Wace and Langtoft. The latter of these was a canon regular of St. Austin, at Bridlington, in Yorkshire. Another name well known in the list of minstrels is that of Thomas the Rhymer, who flourished during the thirteenth century in the south of Scotland. His full name is thought to have been Thomas Learmount of Ercildoun (now Earlston, near Melrose). He and an unknown poet, Thomas of Kendal, are mentioned by Robert of Brunne as the authors of *Sir Tristrem*, a romance which was little known until it was published by Sir Walter Scott at the outset of his literary career.

Dr. Craik thus sums up the leading facts in the history of English metrical romance:—

1. At least the first examples of it were translations from the French.

2. If any such were produced so early as before the close of the twelfth century (of which we have no evidence), they were probably designed for the entertainment of the mere commonalty, to whom alone the French language was unknown.

3. In the thirteenth century were composed the earliest of those we now possess in their original form.

4. In the fourteenth century the English took the place of the French metrical romance in all classes. This was its brightest era.

5. In the fifteenth it was supplanted by another species of poetry, among the more educated classes,

and had also to contend with another rival in the prose romance ; but, nevertheless, it still continued to be produced, although in less quantity and of an inferior fabric.

6. It did not altogether cease to be read and written until after the commencement of the sixteenth century.

7. From that time the taste for this earliest form of our poetical literature lay asleep, until, after the lapse of three hundred years, it was reawakened last century by Scott.

THE MONK.—Let us now turn from the brilliant scenes in which the old minstrel was most at home to the quiet gloom of monastic life, and see what literary work went on within those thick oaken doors, studded with heavy nails, whose hinges creaked out but a churlish welcome to the belated harpist, or often refused to creak at all.

We pass through the arched gateway—rounded if the building be of the earlier Norman style, pointed if of the later Gothic—and across the broad quadrangle, through a smaller door into the arched and pillared cloister, where draughts are not unfrequent invaders through the unglazed loop-holes, and the green damp has traced its grotesque velvet-work upon the cold stone. A few sombre figures glide through the shadowy stillness ; but we do not linger here. Up a narrow stair of winding stone into a higher room, arched and pillared too, but lighter, and dotted with long-robed monks, all intent upon real and useful work—doing that service to our literature for which the mediæval monastery deserves our warmest gratitude. We have reached the *Scriptorium* ; and its chilly bareness certainly presents a striking contrast to the snug, carpeted, and thick-curtained libraries in which modern scholars produce their work. Round the naked stone walls wooden chests are ranged, heaped with the precious manuscripts, to multiply and adorn which is the task of those cowed and dark-skirted men who toil in that



workroom of the abbey. And over the rude desks and tables of the time heads of many hues are bending—choir-boys with locks of curly flax; grave-browed men, whose ring of raven hair, surrounding the shaven crown, proclaims the noon of life; and the thinly silvered head of weak old age—all intent upon their work. Now and then a novice, to whom a common work, or some much-used Service-book for the choir, has been entrusted, crosses to the side of that keen-eyed, wrinkled monk, who has power in his glance, and humbly begs advice as to the form of a letter or the colouring of a design. And ever and anon the grave tone of this same instructor checks with a few calm words the buzz that sometimes rises from the boyish monks whom he guides. There are things in that Scriptorium which we miss in our writing-desks and on our study tables. Besides the quills and coloured inks, there are reed-pens, pots of brilliant paint, phials of gold and silver size, hair pencils of various shapes and kinds—for the work of the copyist-monks is rather that of the artist than of the mere penman; and although the figures which adorn the brilliant illuminations of those Missals and Psalters that preserve in the twentieth century the arts of dead ages have much of the stiffness of all mediæval drawing, yet for beauty of design and richness of colouring many productions of the quiet Scriptorium remain unsurpassed by modern pencils.

Let us draw near to this transcriber—evidently a monk of note, from his solitary state—who sits apart on his straight-backed wooden chair, and note the progress of his work. He is copying the Gospels upon vellum, and has just put the finishing touches to a painting, glowing with scarlet and gold and blue lace-work, fantastically formed of intermingled flowers and birds, which has occupied the hot noontide hours of a full week. The brilliant tracery forms the initial letter of the chapter. This done, he takes the pen, and rapidly, with practised hand, traces in black ink





CHAUCER READING TO KING EDWARD III.

*From the painting by Ford Madox Brown.*

*(Photo by Hanfstaengl.)*

the thick perpendicular strokes of that old English text-hand, which have given their name to our black-letter manuscripts. While the right hand guides the pen, the left holds a knife, whose point, pressed upon the vellum, is ever ready to shape a clumsy line or erase a wrong word. There are no capitals except the brilliant and fanciful initials; nor any points except a slight dash, occasionally used to divide the sentences. When the book is finished, which may be the work of years if the decorations are minute and profuse, the title will probably be painted in red ink (hence the word *Rubric*); and the name of the copyist, with date and place of completion, will also shine in brilliant scarlet or other coloured ink at the foot of the last page. The headings of the various chapters are also written for the most part in red ink.

Perhaps the richest specimens of the ancient manuscript are those copies of the Gospels on purple vellum, written in silver letters with the sacred names in gold, which were favourite productions of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries. These, however, were not originally of English growth, but were the offspring of Greek luxury.

It was upon the initial letters and the marginal ornaments with which the pages of these mediæval manuscripts were adorned that the taste and labour of the illuminators were chiefly bestowed. Angelic and human figures, birds, beasts, and fishes, flowers, shells, and leaves were all pressed into the service of the patient monks. Rare and exquisite patterns grew under their unwearying pencils in the Scriptorium, until each page of the Missal or Service-book presented an embroidery of gorgeous colouring, resembling nothing so much as the many-hued splendours of a great cathedral window, through which stream the rays of the setting sun.

It would be vain to attempt a description of these beautiful works. Many pages of this book might be filled with a mere enumeration of the various figures

and colours combined in one of the splendid designs. How hard and how long the monks must have worked at their copying-desks can only be judged by those who have turned over the leaves of an illuminated Missal executed in the Scriptorium of some old abbey.

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## CHAPTER II.

SIR JOHN DE MANDEVILLE.

Born about 1300 A.D. . . . . Died 1372 A.D.

THE most famous name in the early history of English prose, whose work survives, was that of Sir John de Mandeville.

He was born at St. Albans, in Hertfordshire, about the year 1300. Educated for the medical profession, he had scarcely finished his studies when, impelled by the irresistible desire of change, he is believed to have set out at the age of twenty-two to travel in distant lands. He joined a Mohammedan army in Palestine. He saw some service under the Sultan of Egypt. He penetrated even as far as Cathay (China), where, we are told, he lived for three years at Pekin. Turkey, Persia, Armenia, India, Ethiopia, Libya, and many other places were also visited by him. His knowledge of medicine often stood his friend, no doubt, among the rude tribes with whom he met. For thirty-four years Mandeville, according to his own account, roved over the wildest regions of the Old World, looked upon as lost and dead by all his friends at home. And when he came back a worn greybeard, he found, instead of the many fresh cheeks and bright eyes of the friends from whom he had parted so long ago, only the welcome of a few thin and withered men.

1356 In or about the year 1356, immediately after A.D. his return, he wrote in Latin a *Narrative of his Travels*. This work was afterwards translated by himself into French in 1371, and in 1400 into

English by another hand. Modern criticism is, on the whole, sceptical about the extent of his travels, and is inclined to think that much of his material was gained from older books and from the reports of adventurers.

Mandeville's great fault as a writer was, that he loaded his pages with the wildest stories, picked up by the way, and admitted upon the shallowest testimony. The most extravagant offshoots of the chivalrous Romance find a parallel in many passages of the oldest work of English prose, in which monsters, giants, and demons are found to swarm. Such stories as of men with tails, and of a bird native to Madagascar that could carry an elephant in its talons, are given with the greatest seriousness. At the same time a fuller knowledge of far lands has done something to rehabilitate Mandeville, as it has rehabilitated Marco Polo, and some of his marvels are now shown to be a perverted version of strange truths. For all its extravagance, the English translation possesses for us a deep interest, both as a remarkable monument of our speech in its infancy, and as a specimen of the style of thought common in an age predisposed to wonders.

Mandeville, roving again from England, died and was buried at Liège in 1372.

The following extract is from the seventh chapter of his *Travels*, entitled "Of the Pilgrimages in Jerusalem, and of the Holy Places thereabout: :"—

And zee schull undirstonde that whan men comen to Jerusalem her first pilgrymage is to the chirche of the Holy Sepulcr wher oure Lord was buried, that is withoute the cytee on the north syde. But it is now enclosed in with the ton wall. And there is a full fair chirche all rownd, and open above, and covered with leed. And on the west syde is a fair tour and an high for belles strongly made. And in the myddes of the chirche is a tabernacle as it wer a lytyll hows, made with a low lytyll dore; and that tabernacle is made in maner of a half a compas right curiously and richely made of gold and azure and othere riche coloures, full nobelyche made. And in the ryght side of that tabernacle is the sepulcre of oure Lord. And the tabernacle is viij fote long and v fote wide, and xj fote in heghte. And it is not longe sithe the sepulcre was all open, that men myghte kisse it and touche it. But for pilgrymes that comen thider peyned hem to breke the ston in peces, or in poudr; therefore the Soudan [*Sultan*] hath do make a wall aboute the sepulcr that



no man may towche it. But in the left syde of the wall of the tabernacle is well the heichte of a man, is a gret ston, to the quantytee of a mannes hed, that was of the holy sepulcr, and that ston kissen the pilgrymes that comen thider. In that tabernacle ben no wyn-dowes, but it is all made light with lampes that hangen befor the sepulcr. And there is a lampe that hongeth befor the sepulcr that brenneth light, and on the Gode fryyday it goth out be him self, at that hour that our Lord roos fro deth to lyve. Also within the chirche at the right syde besyde the queer of the churche is the Mount of Calvarye, wher our Lord was don on the cros. And it is a roche of white coloure and a lytill medled with red. And the cros was set in a morteyns in the same roche, and on that roche dropped the woundes of our Lord, whan he was pyned on the cros, and that is cleped [*called*] Golgatha. And men gon up to that Golgatha be degrees [*steps*]. And in the place of that morteyns was Adames hed found after Noes flode, in tokene that the synnes of Adam scholde ben bought in that same place. And upon that roche made Abraham sacrificse to our Lord.

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### CHAPTER III.

JOHN DE WYCLIFFE.

Born about 1324 A.D. . . . . Died 1384 A.D.

ON a rocky point overhanging the Tees in Yorkshire a manor-house stood, in which once lived the Wycliffes of Wycliffe.\* There, probably in 1324, a boy was born, who has gilded the family name with undying lustre. Among the rich woodlands of that fertile valley he grew up, taught, we know not certainly where or by whom, until he reached his sixteenth year. Then a new world opened upon the country squire's son.

Travelling to Oxford on horseback, and spending, no doubt, many weeks upon the rough and  
 1340 perilous journey, young Wycliffe was entered  
 A.D. as a Commoner upon the books of Queen's College, a newly-founded school. From Queen's he soon removed to Merton. The students of Oxford in that day were, as we learn from Chaucer, as strongly marked out into reading men and fast men as they are in our own century. Among the motley company that

\* The name *Wycliffe* means the "cliff by the water." The family took their surname from their manor.

rode out of the Tabard gateway down the Canterbury road, there was "a clerk of Oxenforde," lean and logical, who would rather have had twenty red- or black-bound books at his bed's head than wear the richest robes or revel in the sweetest joys of music ; and in violent contrast to this good threadbare book-worm, the Miller in his tale gives a full-length portrait of the dissolute "parish clerk Absolon," who, clad in hosen red and light-blue kirtle, with a snowy surplice flowing around his dainty limbs, and the windows of St. Paul's carved upon his shoes, minced through the service of the parish church. Many such did John Wycliffe meet in the streets and schools of Oxford ; but his place must have been, not among the brew-houses, ringing with the sounds of fiddle and dance, but among the red-bound books in his quiet rooms. His rise was rapid. In 1361 he was presented to the college living of Fylingham ; and towards the close of the same year he was elected Master of Balliol College.

Mendicant friars at that time swarmed all over England, who, by the sale of relics and pardons "all hot from Rome," fleeced the poor country-folk of their hard-earned groats. Such a one was the Pardoner of the *Canterbury Tales*, who sold clouts and pigs' bones as holy relics, for money, wool, cheese, and wheat, swindling even the poorest widow out of her mite ; and all the while, amid the farrago of old stories, with which he pleased his gaping audience, taking up the hypocritical cry, "Radix malorum est cupiditas." Such canting and cheating kindled rage in the honest heart of Wycliffe, who directed his sturdy eloquence against them. In his treatise called *Objections to Friars*, he maintained that the Gospel in its freedom, without error of man, is the sole rule of religion. And thus he struck the keynote in the noble music of his life.

In 1363, Wycliffe took the degree of D.D. at Oxford, and thus became qualified to lecture as a Professor of Divinity. Armed with this new power, the plain-

speaking Englishman gathered a band of pupils in a wooden hall, roughly plastered and roofed with thatch, like all Oxford at that date, and there lifted up his voice boldly against the corrupted doctrines and the swollen avarice of the Church.

His fame led the rulers of England to send him, in 1374, as envoy to Bruges, to protest against certain encroachments of the papal power. A momentous journey it was to Wycliffe, for at Bruges he seems to have become acquainted with John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, who afterwards shielded the reformer in many a perilous hour.

Already there was thunder in the air, gathering and blackening round Wycliffe's path. A charge  
1377 of heresy was laid against him, and he was  
A.D. summoned before the Houses of Convocation.

On the 19th of February 1377 a venerable man, his face "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," stood within old St. Paul's, a gray beard sweeping his breast, a dark belted robe flowing to his feet, and a tall white staff held firmly in his thin hand. But he did not stand alone. The eldest living son of the king, and the Earl Marshal of England stood by his side; for Lancaster and Percy loved and honoured the brave Oxford Doctor. The storm passed harmless by. A dispute which rose between Lancaster and Bishop Courtney as to whether the accused should sit or stand, Courtney insisting on the latter, excited so fierce a tumult that the meeting was dissolved. During all the evening shouting mobs ran riot through the streets of London.

Then King Edward died, and his grandson Richard reigned. So marked a man had Wycliffe become in this Reformation struggle, that the first Parliament of Richard the Second submitted to him a question, "Was it lawful to keep back the treasure of the kingdom for its own defence, instead of sending it away to the Pope?" Who can need to be told the reply?

This could not go on without drawing forth thunder

from the banks of Tiber. Five bulls, couched in fierce words, were launched against that "master in error," John Wycliffe, who was forthwith to be committed to jail. Summoned before a synod at Lambeth in April 1378, he replied to all charges manfully, and to honest minds most convincingly. And yet, in spite of this increased boldness, he was not seized and martyred; because nearly all English laymen were on his side—some from political motives, others on religious grounds. The Pope and his creatures, though their hearts burned to smite him down, dared not do so, for they feared the people.

It was then that a wasting sickness seized him at Oxford. His health, worn out with study, gave way under the mental wear of these troubled years. He lay, as it seemed, on the point of death, when eight men—four doctors to represent the mendicant friars, and four aldermen of the town—entered his chamber. They came to talk the old man into an undoing of his life's work—into a penitent recantation of what they called his errors. He listened until they had done, then "holding them with his glittering eye," he signed to his servant to raise him in the bed, and in strong, defiant tone he cried, "I shall not die, but live; and again declare the evil deeds of the friars!" What could they do but grow pale and go? As he lay panting on the pillow, new life shot through his frame; and in no long time he rose again from that bed to do battle in the cause of truth.

His attack upon transubstantiation drew upon him the wrath of his University. One day in 1381 the Chancellor entered his classroom, and in the hearing of his scholars condemned his teaching as heretical. This finally led to the shutting of his class. But it was not in the power of Chancellors or Primates to stop the spread of light in the land. Though proceedings were taken against the disciples of Wycliffe—and all the more bitterly when that fiery adherent of the Pope, Courtney, became Archbishop of Canter-

bury—yet their number constantly increased. Not one voice but many were now heard in the land. “Poor priests,” as they were called, trudged barefoot even into the remotest hamlets, preaching, in defiance of the clergy, wherever they could gather a crowd to hear them, in church, churchyard, market-place, or fair. So the good seed was sown broadcast over England; and though often trampled fiercely down by the priesthood of a later day, especially in London and the great towns, in many a green far-off country nook it sprang and ripened and safely bore its golden fruit.

Nearly five years before he was silenced at Oxford, Wycliffe had become Rector of Lutterworth, a Leicestershire parish, watered by the little river Swift. Until 1381 his time was about equally divided between his cottagers in Leicestershire and his students at Oxford. But after that date he devoted himself with earnest heart to the work of a country parson; and never does Wycliffe, first scholar of his day and keenest logician of the Oxford halls, seem so truly great as when we trace his footsteps among the hovels of Lutterworth. A sorry place it would have seemed to a townsman of modern Lutterworth, glowing with red brick and gaslight. Two or three rows of thatched cabins, built chiefly of lath and plaster, straggled along the sloping banks of the Swift. From the uneven street one stepped in upon a foul earthen floor. The rafters above hung thick with black soot; for there were no chimneys, and the smoke found its way out of door or window as it best could. There, in the meanest hut, might the good rector be often seen, cheering with kind words the sick peasant, who had then no better bed than a heap of straw, and no softer pillow than a log of wood. The morning he spent among his books, revising a Latin treatise, or adding some sentences to the English Bible that was fast growing beneath his patient pen. In the afternoon he girt his long dark robe about him, took his white

staff, and went out among his flock. And on Sundays, clad in a gorgeous vestment, adorned with golden cherubs, of which some tarnished fragments are still shown, he preached the truth in homely English words, from that pulpit of carved oak which stands in Lutterworth Church—a sacred memorial of one who has worthily been called “The morning star of our English Reformation.”

So passed the last years of this great life. In his sixtieth year, while he was engaged in sacred service within the chancel of Lutterworth Dec. 31, Church, paralysis, which had already shaken 1384 his frame severely, struck him down to die. A.D. A day or two later, in the last hours of the dying year, his intrepid spirit passed away from the clouds and toils of earth.

More than forty years had swept by, when the pent-up vengeance of his enemies, from which the living man had been mercifully shielded, burst in impotent fury upon his corpse. The coffin was torn up, and carried to the little bridge over the Swift, where his bones were burned to ashes and scattered on the waters of the brook. “Thus,” says worthy Thomas Fuller, “the brook conveyed his ashes to Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over.”

As a writer, Wycliffe’s great merit lies in his having given to England the first *English* version of the *whole* Bible. There were already existing a few English fragments, such as many of the Psalms, certain portions of Mark and Luke, and some of the Epistles. But to the mass of the people the Bible was a sealed book, locked up in a dead and foreign tongue. Wycliffe soon saw the incalculable value of an English Bible in the work of the English Reformation, and set himself to the noble task of giving a boon so precious to his native land. No doubt he sought the aid of



other pens, but to what extent we cannot now determine. The greater part of the work—perhaps the whole—was done during those quiet years at Lutterworth, between 1381 and his death. It is nearly certain that he saw the work finished before he died. A complete edition of Wycliffe's Bible, in five volumes, was issued in 1850 from the Oxford Press.

His Latin works are very numerous. One of the principal was called *Trialogus*, which embodies his opinions in a series of conversations carried on by Truth, Wisdom, and Falsehood. It contains, no doubt, the essence of his class lectures.

From his country parsonage by the Swift he poured forth an incredible number of English tracts and treatises, addressed to the people, and thoroughly leavened with his earnest love of truth. The characteristic feature of his English is a manly ruggedness. Content to know that his meaning is strongly and clearly put, he often disdains all elegance of style, and sometimes lapses into slovenliness. We may compare him, as an opponent of error, not to a gallant master of fence, glistening in well-cut taffeta, who with keen rapier lunges home to the heart, while he never loses elegance of posture and movement; but rather to the sturdy, leather-clad rustic, who wields his oaken quarter-staff with such sweeping vigour, that in a twinkling he beats down his opponent's guard.

#### SPECIMEN OF WYCLIFFE'S PROSE.

##### PART OF LUKE XXIV.

But in o day of the woke ful eerli thei camen to the graue, and brougthen swete smelling spices that thei hadden arayed. And thei founden the stoon turnyd away fro the graue. And thei geden in and foundun not the bodi of the Lord Jhesus. And it was don, the while thei weren astonyed in thought of this thing, lo twey men stodun bisidis hem in schynyng cloth. And whanne thei dredden and bowiden her semblaunt into erthe, thei seiden to hem, what seeken ye him that lyueth with deede men? He is not here; but he is risun: haue ye minde how he spak to you whanne he was yit in Golilce, and seide, for it behoueth mannes sone to be bitakun into the hondis of synful men; and to be crucifyed: and the thridde day to rise agen? And thei bithoughten on hise wordis, and thei

geden agen fro the graue : and teelden alle these thingis to the ellevene and to alle othere. And there was Marye Maudeleyn and Jone and Marye of James, and othere wymmen that weren with hem, that seiden to Apostlis these thingis.

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CHAPTER IV.

X GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

Born about 1340 A.D. . . . . Died 1400 A.D.

CHAUCER is a star of the first magnitude. The first great writer of English verse, he proudly wears the honoured title, "Father of English Poetry;" nor can the most brilliant of his successors feel ashamed of such a lineage.

The accounts of his early life are very uncertain, and most of the evidence once accepted is now disproved. He calls himself a Londoner; and an inscription on his tomb was once believed to fix his birth in the year 1328. The opinion of his most recent biographer, however, is that his birth occurred about 1340. The words "Philogenet, of Cambridge, Clerk," which occur in a work once attributed to him, have caused it to be inferred that he was educated at Cambridge. Warton and others claim him, without authority, as an Oxford man. A bogus entry in some old register of the Inns of Court reports that "Geffrey Chaucer was fined two shillings for beating a Franciscane friar in Fleet Street;" which ebullition of young blood was the basis of his supposed law-studies in the Inner Temple.

The favour of John of Gaunt introduced him to court and the favour of King Edward the Third. At seventeen he was appointed page to Elizabeth de Burgh, wife of Lionel, Edward the Third's third son. The handsome and accomplished poet, with his red lips and graceful shape, was the very man to win his way in a courtly circle. He went with the army to

France, where, in 1359, he was made prisoner at the siege of Retiers, in Brittany. On his release and return home in 1360, we find his prospects grow brighter and brighter. One grant following another showed how dear the man of letters who could also wield a sword was to the brave old king. When in his twenty-seventh year (1367), the poet received a pension of 20 marks; which, as each silver mark weighed eight ounces and was worth £10 of our money, was equivalent to £200 a year. Five years later he was sent with two others to Genoa, on an important commercial mission; during which trip he is thought to have travelled in northern Italy, to have visited Petrarch at Padua, and to have heard from the very lips of that "old man eloquent" the story of "Patient Grisilde," which he afterwards embodied in the *Clerkes Tale*.

Then came other royal grants—a pitcher of wine daily for life—the office of Comptroller of Customs of wool, wine, etc., in the Port of London—the wardship of a rich heir, for three years' guardianship of whom he got £104. In 1366 he married a maid of honour, whose sister afterwards became the wife of his patron, John of Gaunt. By this union a pension of 100 shillings, lately conferred on his wife, was added to his income. Two more diplomatic missions, to Flanders and to France, proved the confidence reposed in him by his royal master. Thus, rich, honoured, useful, and, we may conjecture, happy, Geoffrey Chaucer saw in 1377 the gray head of the third Edward go down with sorrow to the grave.

At first, under the new reign, all was bright, and continued so for some seven years. In the first year of Richard the Second his daily gallon of wine was exchanged for a pension of twenty marks, and other gifts were bestowed on the prosperous comptroller. But soon his sun was darkly clouded. It was not likely that he could avoid taking an active part in the difficulties that arose between Richard and Lan-

caster ; and, as his feelings were strongly enlisted on the side of the duke, he fell into disfavour with the king. He was deprived of his offices, and forced to raise money on the security of his pensions. These were in turn taken from him, and though he received some small offices, he speedily lost them.

The accession of Henry the Fourth, son of his old friend, John of Gaunt, brought better fortune to the poet, who received new pensions ; but he did not live long to enjoy this greater wealth. Within a house which is said to have stood in a garden near the site of Henry the Seventh's Chapel at Westminster, he died on October 25, 1400. His body was buried close by in the Abbey, where the dust of England's noblest dead is laid.

Chaucer's chequered life was such as to wear off all the little roughnesses and conceits of his earlier character, and bring the fine grain of the manly nature below into full view. He saw both the lights and the shadows of human existence—at one time the admired of a brilliant court, at another a bankrupt. But through every change he seems to have borne a heart unsoured by care ; and even in old age a joyous spirit shone in his wrinkled face. A small, fair, round-trimmed beard fringed those lips, whose red fullness was remarked as a special beauty in the handsome face of the young poet. His common dress consisted of red hose, horned shoes, and a loose frock of camlet, reaching to the knee, with wide sleeves fastened at the wrist.

Chaucer's fame as a writer rests chiefly upon his *Canterbury Tales*. The idea of the poems is perhaps borrowed from the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, in which a hundred tales are supposed to be told after dinner by the persons spending ten days in a country house near Florence during a time of plague. Chaucer's plan is this : A company of some twenty-nine or thirty pilgrims collect at the Tabard Inn in Southwark, bound for the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket

at Canterbury. The motley gathering contains specimens of nearly every character then common in the streets and homes of England. After the Prologue has described the company and their start, a brave Knight, bronzed by the Syrian sun, tells the first tale. Then follows the Miller, "dronken of ale;" and so the tale goes round, often merrily, but sometimes of a sadder tone, beguiling the miles of the weary road. As Chaucer sketches the plan of the work in his Prologue, each pilgrim ought to tell two stories when going to Canterbury, and two more on the homeward way; and the whole proceedings were to be wound up with a supper at the Tabard, where the teller of the best tales was to be entertained by the rest of the band. The poet did not live to complete his design. Twenty-four tales only are given; the arrival at Canterbury, the scenes at the shrine, the tales of the return, the wind-up supper, are all untold. Two of the stories—the Tale of Melibeus and the Persones Tale—are in prose, and afford a very favourable specimen of Chaucer's power in that kind of writing. Nothing could surpass the *Canterbury Tales* as a series of pictures of the middle-class English life during the fourteenth century. Every character is a perfect study, drawn from the life with a free yet careful hand—in effect broad, and brilliant in colour, but painted with a minuteness of touch and a careful finish that remind us strongly of the elaborate pencilling of our pre-Raphaelite artists, whose every ivy-leaf and straw is a finished work.

This great work was written during the quiet sunset of the poet's life, when, after his sixtieth year, he rested from the toils and troubles of a public career. It is composed in pentameter couplets—a form of verse thoroughly suited to the spirit of our English tongue, and used by almost all the great masters of our literature. The abundance of French words in the language of Chaucer is easily accounted for by the fact that French was not in the poet's day quite super-

seded as the speech of the upper classes in England. Many of Chaucer's words require a French accentuation ; such as *aventure*, *licour*, *corage*. There has been much discussion about the true way of reading Chaucer ; some maintaining that the rhythm is to be preserved by certain pauses, while others, following Tyrwhitt, sound as a separate syllable the *e*, which is now silent at the end of so many words. Most prefer the latter method, which has the advantage of giving to the language an antique air, suitable to the cast of the plot and the period of the poem. The *ed* at the end of certain verbs, and the *es* terminating nouns in the plural number or the possessive case, are always to be made separate syllables.

In dealing with Chaucer's literary production, the main fact to be remembered is that he was above all things a conscious literary artist. He strove to discover a fit measure for his verse, and to embody his thoughts in that medium, paying due regard to assonance and scansion. And his prose works, the translation of *Boethius* and the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, show that his intellectual interest was not confined to poetry. The earliest of his poetical works whose date can be exactly fixed is the *Book of the Duchess*, written in 1369 on the death of Blanche, wife of John of Gaunt. To this early period may also be ascribed the translation of the *Romaunt of the Rose*, which we know Chaucer made, but which is not to be wholly identified with the version that has come down to us. The second period of the poet's life (1369-86) is credited with the *Parliament of Birds*, the *House of Fame*, the *Legend of Good Women*, the first draft of the *Knights Tale*, and other works afterwards incorporated in the *Canterbury Tales*, such as the *Clerkes Tale* (*Griselda*), the *Second Nunnes Tale* (*St. Cecilia*), and the *Monkes Tale* (*De Hugolino Comite Pise*)—all of which show the strong and direct influence exercised on Chaucer by the Italian poets. The plan of the *Canterbury Tales*, and the execution of many of them



(including the writing of the wonderful Prologue), were the work of the poet's final and most troubled period. The most noticeable feature of Chaucer's genius is its strong dramatic turn, which anticipates the spirit, though not the distinctive form, of the Elizabethan epoch.

In closing our sketch of Geoffrey Chaucer, the recorded opinions of a great poet and a great critic are well worthy of remembrance. While Spenser says,—

“That renowned Poet  
Dan Chaucer, well of English undefyled,  
On Fame's eternall beadroll worthy to be fyled,”

no less a literary judge than Hallam classes him with Dante and Petrarch in the great poetic triumvirate of the Middle Ages.

The following is a specimen of Chaucer's verse :—

### THE KNIGHT AND THE SQUIER.

FROM THE PROLOGUE OF THE “CANTEBURY TALES.”

A KNIGHT ther was, and that a worthy man, That fro the time that he firste began To riden out, he loved chevalrie, Trouthe and honoúr, fredom and curtesie. Ful worthy was he in his lordes <i>weire</i> , And therto hadde he ridden, no man <i>ferre</i> , As wel in Cristendom as in Hethenesse, And ever honoured for his worthinesse.	[war [further
This <i>ilke</i> worthy knight hadde ben also Somtime with the lord of Palatie, Agen another hethen in Turkie : And evermore he hadde a sovereine <i>pris</i> . And though that he was worthy he was wise, And of his port as meke as is a mayde. He never yet no vilanie ne sayde In alle his lif, unto no <i>manere wight</i> . He was a veray parfit gentil knight. But for to tellen you of his araie, His hors was good, but he ne was not gaie. Of fustian he wered a <i>gipon</i> , Alle <i>besmotred</i> with his habergeon. For he was late ycome from his <i>viage</i> , And wente for to don his pilgrimage.	[same [praise [kind of person [a short cassock [smutted [voyage
With him ther was his sone a yongé SQUIER, A lover, and a lusty bachelor, With lockes <i>crull</i> as they were laide in presse. Of twenty yere of age he was I gesse.	[curled





THE PILGRIMAGE TO CANTERBURY: FROM CHAUCER'S "CANTERBURY TALES."

*From the picture by Thomas Stothard, R.A., in the National Gallery.*

Of his stature he was of even lengthe,  
 And wonderly *deliver*, and grete of strengthe. [nimble  
 And he hadde be somtime in *chevachie*, [an expedition  
 In Flaundres, in Artois, and in Picardie,  
 And borne him wel, as of so litel space,  
 In hope to stonden in his ladies grace.  
*Embrouded* was he, as it were a mede [embroidered  
 Alle ful of fresshe floures, white and rede.  
 Singing he was, or *floyting* alle the day, [playing on the flute  
 He was as fresshe as is the moneth of May.  
 Short was his goune, with sleeves long and wide.  
 Wel coude he sitte on hors, and fayre ride.  
 He coude songes make, and wel *endite*, [relate  
 Juste and eke dance, and wel *pourtraie* and write.  
 So hote he loved, that by *nightertale* [the night-time  
 He slep no more than doth the nightingale.  
 Curteis he was, lowly, and servisable,  
 And *carf* before his fader at the table. [carved

## CHAPTER V.

JOHN GOWER.

Born about 1325 A.D. . . . . Died 1408 A.D.

THOUGH ranking far below the great Father of English Poetry, "the moral Gower," as his friend Chaucer calls him in the *Troilus and Creseide*, yet holds an honoured place among our earlier bards. We know very little of his personal history.

He was perhaps born in 1325. One of the most illustrious houses in the realm now bears his name; and even in the far-off days of the poet's birth the family was of noble blood. Supposed to have been a scion of the Gowers resident in the twelfth century at Stittenham, in Yorkshire, he seems to have studied at Merton College, Oxford, and to have adopted the law as his profession. Indeed, there is a story to the effect that he was a judge of the Common Pleas. But evidence is not forthcoming to prove that Sir John Gower the judge and John Gower the poet were one and the same man.

Like Chaucer, with whom he was long very inti-

mate, although it is said that their friendship cooled at last, Gower espoused the cause of one of King Richard's uncles. *His* patron was the Duke of Gloucester, whose murder at Calais is one of the mysteries of a miserable reign. During the last nine years of his life, Gower was blind (1399-1408). He died rich, leaving to his widow the then large sum of £100, along with the rents of two manors, one in Nottinghamshire and one in Suffolk. His tomb in the Church of St. Saviour, Southwark, which was called in the fourteenth century St. Mary Overy, represents the poet pillowed upon three volumes, in memory of his three great works. His grave face, framed with a mass of long auburn hair, well befits his name of "Moral Gower."

Gower's three great works were called *Speculum Meditantis*, *Vox Clamantis*, and *Confessio Amantis*. Of these, the first, said to have been in French, has been lost; the second, in Latin, still preserved in manuscript, was edited in 1850 for the Roxburgh Society; the third is that work of the poet which has entitled him to an enduring place in our literature, for it is nearly all in English. There is in the library of the Duke of Sutherland at Trentham a volume, in which there are many French love sonnets, written by Gower when young, so full of sweetness and feeling as to have drawn the warmest praises from Warton.

The plot of the *Confessio Amantis* is rather odd. A lover holds a dialogue with his confessor, *Genius*, who is a priest of Venus. The priest, before he will grant absolution, probes the heart of his penitent to the core, trying all its weak spots. He plies him with moral tales in illustration of his teaching, giving him, *en passant*, lessons in chemistry and the philosophy of Aristotle. After all the tedious shrift, when our hero seems to be so arrayed in a panoply of purity and learning as to render his victory a certain thing, we suddenly find that he is now too old to care for the triumph wished for so long. Ellis, in his *Speci-*

*mens of the Early English Poets*, characterizes the narrative of Gower as being often *petrifying*. And although this poet's place, as second to Chaucer during the infancy of our literature, cannot be disputed, still it must be confessed that old John is often prolix, and generally dull.

## FROM GOWER'S "CONFESSIO AMANTIS."

## A ROMAN STORY.

In a Croniq I fynde thus,  
 How that Caius Fabricius  
 Wich whilome was consul of Rome,  
 By whome the lawes *yede* and come, [went  
 Whan the Sampnitees to him brouht  
 A somme of golde, and hym by souht  
 To done hem fauoure in the lawe,  
 Towarde the golde he gan hym drawe :  
 Whereof in alle mennes loke,  
 A part in to his honde he tooke,  
 Wich to his mouthe in alle haste  
 He put hit for to smelle and taste,  
 And to his ihe and to his ere,  
 Bot he ne fonde no comfort there :  
 And thanne he be gan it to despise,  
 And tolde vnto hem in this wise :  
 " I not what is with golde to thryve  
 Whan none of alle my wittes fyve  
 Fynt savour ne delite ther inne  
 So is it bot a nyce sinne  
 Of golde to ben to coveitous,  
 Bot he is riche an glorious  
 Wich hath in his subieccion  
 The men wich in possession  
 Ben riche of golde, and by this *skille*, [reason  
 For he may alday whan he wille,  
 Or be him leef or be him loth,  
 Justice don vppon hem bothe."  
 Lo thus he seide and with that worde  
 He threwe to fore hem on the borde  
 The golde oute of his honde anon,  
 And seide hem that he wolde none  
 So that he kepte his liberte  
 To do justice and equite.



## CHAPTER VI.

## KING JAMES THE FIRST OF SCOTLAND.

Born 1394 A.D. . . . . Died 1437 A.D.

THE romantic story of this royal poet is well known. His father, Robert the Third, whose heart had been well-nigh broken by the murder of his darling son Rothesay, put his only remaining son, James, on board a ship bound for France, that the boy might be safe from the wiles of Albany. The ship being seized off Flamborough Head, in Yorkshire, the prince was led a captive to the English Court—an event which brought his father's gray head in sorrow to the grave. This happened in 1406, when young James was only twelve years of age. From that time, until his release in 1424, he remained in England, living chiefly at Windsor, and receiving an education befitting his royal birth. He seems to have excelled in every study and every sport; but the music of the harp and the making of verses were his chief delights. Chaucer's poetry and Gower's were studied eagerly by the captive king, and "from admiration to imitation there is but a step." But a power greater than delight in Chaucer's verse was at work in the poet's breast. He fell in love; and while all life was bright with the gleam of a new passion, he sang his sweetest song.

Early one morning, so runs his story in imitation of Chaucer's *Palamon and Arcite*, looking from a window in the Round Tower of Windsor out upon a garden thick with May leaves, and musical with the liquid song of nightingales, he saw walking below a lady, young, lovely, richly dressed, and jewelled. This was Jane Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset. His love for her, speedily kindled, inspired his greatest work, *The King's Quhair* (quire or book). The poem, written in one hundred and ninety-seven stanzas of seven lines each, contains many particulars of the

poet's life, the most admired passage being that in which he describes his first glimpse of his future wife walking in the leafy garden. The workmanship of many stanzas is exquisite.

Although King James ranks so high as a poet of love and sentiment, he seems equally at home in a broad comic vein of description. Two poems of this class—*Christis Kirk on the Grene* and *Peblis to the Play*—are ascribed to him rather than to James the Fifth. Both humorously describe certain old Scottish country merry-makings.

Ruling not wisely (for himself at least) but too well, this ablest of the Stuarts was stabbed to death in the Monastery of the Dominicans at Perth early in the year 1437. The murderers, chief among them Sir Robert Graham, burst late at night into his private room, found him, where he had hidden, in a vault below the flooring, and after a fearful struggle cut him almost to pieces with their swords and knives.

VERSES SELECTED FROM "THE KING'S QUHAIR."

Cast I down mine eyes again,  
Where as I saw, walking under the Tower,  
Full secretly, new comen here to plain,  
The fairest or the freshest young flower  
That ever I saw, methought, before that hour,  
For which sudden *abate, anon astart,* [went and came  
The blood of all my body to my heart.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Of her array the form if I shall write,  
Towards her golden hair and rich attire,  
In fretwise *couchit* with pearlis white, [inlaid  
And great *balas leaming* as the fire, { *gems of a certain*  
With mony ane emeraut and fairsapphire; } *kind—shining*  
And on her head a chaplet fresh of hue,  
Of plumis parted red, and white, and blue.

Full of quaking spangis bright as gold,  
Forged of shape like to the amoretis,  
So new, so fresh, so pleasant to behold,  
The plumis eke like to the flower *jonets,* [lily  
And other of shape, like to the flower *jonets* ;  
And above all this, there was, well I wot,  
Beauty enough to make a world to dote.

\* \* \* \* \*  
And for to walk that fresh May's morrow,

Ane hook she had upon her tissue white,  
 That goodlier had not been seen *to-forow*, [before  
 As I suppose; and girt she was *alite*, [slightly  
 Thus halflings loose for haste, to such delight  
 It was to see her youth in goodlihede,  
 That for rudeness to speak thereof I dread.

\* \* \* \* \*

And when she walked had a little thraw  
 Under the sweete greene boughis bent,  
 Her fair fresh face, as white as any snaw,  
 She turned hæs, and furth her wayis went;  
 But tho began mine aches and torment,  
 To see her part, and follow I na might;  
 Methought the day was turned into night.

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## CHAPTER VII.

OTHER WRITERS OF THE FIRST ERA.  
 (1340-1476.)

### POETS.

LAURENCE MINOT.—This writer, who flourished under Edward the Third, is called by Dr. Craik the earliest writer of English verse who deserves the name of a poet. We have his ten poems, describing the martial achievements of Edward, such as the battles of *Halidon Hill*, and *Nevil's Cross*, *The Sieges of Tournay and Calais*, and *The Taking of Guisnes*; written, no doubt, between the years 1333 and 1353, and thrown off under the fresh impression of the great events they record. They have all the fine, warlike ring of the older minstrelsy, combined with a polish to which the ballad-singers of former days were strangers.

WILLIAM LANGLAND.—The author of the *Vision of Piers (Peter) Ploughman* was born in Shropshire about 1332. As a secular priest, he had many opportunities of knowing thoroughly those abuses which he lashes with an unsparing hand. The time was indeed a terrible one—the nobles and the clergy were alike corrupt to the very core.

The poet supposes himself to have fallen asleep after a long ramble over the Malvern Hills on a May morn-

ing. As he sleeps, he dreams a series of twenty dreams. The general subject of the poem has been described as similar to that of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The gaudy, changeful scenes of *Vanity Fair* are much the same, in spirit at least, on the canvas of Langland as in the later picture of Bunyan. Losing no opportunity of tearing the cloak from the ignorant and vicious churchmen of his day, this old poet may be said to have struck the first great blow in the battle of the English Reformation.

*Piers Ploughman* is unrhymed, having, as its distinctive feature, a kind of *alliteration*. The following lines will show the nature of this alliteration :—

Ac on a <b>M</b> ay <b>M</b> orwening	[and
On <b>M</b> alvern hills	
Me be <b>F</b> el a <b>F</b> erly,	[wonder
Of <b>F</b> airy me thought.	
I was <b>W</b> eary for- <b>W</b> andered,	{ worn out with
And <b>W</b> ent me to rest	{ wandering
Under a <b>B</b> rood Bank,	
By a <b>B</b> urn's side ;	[broad
And as I <b>L</b> ay and <b>L</b> eaned,	[stream's
And <b>L</b> ooked on the waters,	
I <b>S</b> lumbered into a <b>S</b> leeping,	
It <b>S</b> wayed so <b>m</b> ury.	[sounded—pleasant

JOHN BARBOUR.—Two dates, 1316 and 1320, are assigned for the birth of Barbour, and Aberdeen is named as his native place. He was made Archdeacon of Aberdeen in 1357. Next year we find him acting as one of the commissioners that met at Edinburgh to deliberate upon the ransom of the king, and also receiving a passport from Edward the Third that he might visit Oxford for purposes of study. Three other passports were also granted to him by the English king at various times.

Barbour's great poem is *The Bruce*, an epic, written probably about 1376, in that eight-syllabled verse which Scott has made so famous. The work embraces the events of about forty years, from the death of the Maid of Norway in 1290 to the death of Lord James Douglas in 1330 ; and though styled by the

poet himself a Romaunt, its main narrative has been accepted as true history by all the leading writers upon Scottish affairs. Another poem, called *The Brute*, is said to have been written by Barbour; but it has been lost. Two pensions, one of £10 Scots, the other of twenty shillings, were granted to the poet, both probably by Robert the Second. The language in which Barbour wrote does not differ much from the English of Chaucer, the chief distinction consisting in the broader vowel-sounds of the Scottish poem. Barbour is thought to have died in 1395.

ANDREW WYNTOUN.—This priest, supposed to have been born about 1350, was Prior of the Inch, in Lochleven, and afterwards of the island monastery of St. Serf. In ruder strains than Barbour, he wrote about 1420 an *Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland*, extending from the creation to 1406. This work, part of which was the composition of another poet, is, when we make allowance for the fabulous legends interwoven with it, a clear, trustworthy historical record. It is divided into nine books, and written in eight-syllabled rhymes.

THOMAS HOCCELEVE.—This writer of verses, for poet we can scarcely call him, was born in 1368 or 1369. We learn from his works that he was a lawyer; that he held a government situation under the Privy Seal; and that he led a wild, extravagant life. His chief poem is founded on a Latin work, *De Regimine Principum*, written by Egidius Romanus, an Italian monk. On the whole, Hoccleve's verse must be judged rather by its quantity than its quality. His admission into the ranks of our English writers of note is owing to the circumstance of his writing in a barren age, when every versifier was a man of mark.

JOHN LYDGATE.—Lydgate, the monk of Bury, flourished in the reigns of Henry the Fifth and Henry the Sixth. Educated at Oxford, he added to his college training a wider view of life by travelling in France and Italy. On his return home he opened a school for the instruction of the young in verse-

making and polite composition. His ready pen, kept unceasingly busy, supplied verses of every style and sentiment, producing ballads and hymns with equal ease. He wrote for masks and mummings, coronations and saints' days, for king, citizen, and monk ; and no doubt found the fruit of his work multiplying in the solid shape of gold and silver coin. The chief works of Lydgate, whose *forte* lay in flowing and diffuse description, were the *History of Thebes*, the *Falls of Princes*, and the *History of the Siege of Troy*—the last-named being borrowed from the prose of Guido delle Colonne.

BLIND HARRY.—A poor man, so named, wandered about Scotland during the third quarter of the fifteenth century, reciting poems for bread. This was the author of *The Wallace*, a companion work to Barbour's *Bruce*, but rougher in the grain and less trustworthy, owing to its being chiefly woven from the popular legends afloat concerning the Scottish hero. *The Wallace* contains about twelve thousand lines.

#### PROSE WRITERS.

JOHN DE TREVISA.—A Latin work, the *Polychronicon* of Higden, a monk of Chester, was translated into English prose about 1387 by Trevisa, who was vicar of Berkeley, in Gloucestershire. Many other translations were executed by the same pen.

SIR JOHN FORTESCUE.—Born, it is supposed, in Somersetshire, this eminent lawyer became, in 1442, the Chief-Justice of the King's Bench. Remaining faithful to the Red Rose through every change, he followed Queen Margaret into Flanders, where he lived in exile for some time. Out of evil came good. We owe to this banishment one of the finest of our early English law-books, *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, written in the form of a conversation between himself and his young pupil, Prince Edward. Much more interesting, however, to us is an English work from his pen entitled, *The Governance of England*, the first book on English constitutional theory. It was first published in 1714.



## SECOND ERA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF PRINTING IN 1476 A.D.  
TO THE ACCESSION OF ELIZABETH IN 1558 A.D.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE OLD PRINTERS OF WESTMINSTER.

IN one of the most squalid recesses of Westminster there stood, until 1845, a crazy building of wood and plaster, three stories high. Its pointed roof and wooden balcony were seldom free from poor, fluttering rags of clothing, hung out to dry by the wretched tenants. The very sunlight grew sickly when it fell into the poverty-stricken street, where slipshod women, unshaven, lounging men, and pale, stunted children slunk hopelessly about. Foulness, gloom, and wretchedness were the prominent features of the place around the frail timbers of the house in which the first English printer is said to have lived and wrought. It was almost a mercy when a new street was driven through the poor old house and its tottering neighbours. Not far from this, in the Almonry or Eleemosynary of the Abbey, where the monks of Westminster used to distribute alms to the poor, that London merchant whose name has grown to be a household word set up, most probably in 1476, the first printing-press whose types were inked on English ground.

As we write the name of CAXTON, a grave and beardless face, with an expression somewhat akin to

sadness, rises from the past, looking calmly out from the descending lappets of the hood, which was the fashionable head-dress of his day. Born about 1422 in some lonely farmhouse, a few of which were thinly scattered over the Weald of Kent, William Caxton grew to boyhood among the simple peasants of that wild district. Probably about 1438 he assumed the flat round cap, narrow falling bands, and long coat of coarse cloth, which then formed the dress of the city apprentice; and was soon, no doubt, promoted to the honour of carrying lantern and cudgel at night before the worshipful Master Robert Large, the rich mercer to whom he was bound. A mercer then did not confine his trade to silk: he dealt also in wool and woollen cloth; and, no doubt, in the parcels from the Continent there often came, for sale among the rich English, a few copies of rare and costly manuscripts. From such the apprentice probably obtained his first knowledge of books in their old written shapes.

Upon the death of his master, Caxton went abroad, and continued to reside chiefly in Holland and Flanders for fully thirty years. In 1462 Edward the Fourth appointed him Governor of the English Merchants, an office which he held for about eight years. While he was thus employed, the great invention of printing began to attract the notice of the world. Laurence Coster, if we are to believe the Dutch tradition, in the woods of Haarlem, had shaped his letters of beech-bark, and had looked with delight upon the impression left by the sap upon the parchment in which he had wrapped them. Gutenberg of Mentz had shut himself up in the ruined monastery by Strasbourg, to make the inks, the balls, the cases, and the press. Faust and Schoeffer had joined with Gutenberg, and had betrayed him when they knew his secret. Faust, by offering for sale as many Bibles as were asked for, at one-eighth of the usual price, had excited the wonder of the Paris world, and had evoked a cry that he was in league

with the Enemy of man. And those strange pages, written in the blood of the salesman, as the shuddering gazers whispered to one another, pointing with trembling finger to the letters of brilliant red, had spread their fascinations, too, across the English Channel. A sharp business man like Caxton would not waste much time in sending these novelties to the English market. So printed books began to find their way to England among the silks and perfumes which crossed the sea from Flanders.

A shrewd and clever man this mercer must have been in matters relating to his trade, for we find him in 1464 nominated one of the envoys to the Court of Burgundy, to negotiate a treaty of commerce between the King of England and Duke Philip. It must not be forgotten that the duchy of Burgundy then included nearly all of modern Belgium. And when, four years later, Philip's son, lately made Duke Charles by his father's death, married Margaret Plantagenet, the sister of the English king, William Caxton, 1471 who was already a resident in Bruges, where A.D. the rich and luxurious Court of Burgundy had its seat, entered the service of this English princess, who had changed her country and her name. He had probably already laid down the ell-wand, and had ceased to be seen among the mercers' stalls; but in what capacity he served the duchess we cannot say. His own words tell us that he received from her a yearly fee, for which he rendered honest service. It was when his active mercer's life was over that he took up the pen, and began to work with types and ink-balls.

Our printer's entrance on literary work happened thus: Some months before the gorgeous ceremonies with which Duke Charles brought his English bride to her home in Bruges, Caxton, feeling himself to have no great occupation, sat down in some quiet turret chamber to translate a French book into English. This work was *Recueil des Histoires de Troye*, written

by Duke Philip's chaplain, Raoul le Fèvre. When five or six quires were written, he grew dissatisfied with his English and doubtful of his French; and so the unfinished translation lay aside for two years, tossed among his old invoices and scattered papers. One day "my Lady Margaret," talking to her trusty servant about many things, chanced to hear of this literary pastime, and asked to see the sheets of manuscript. When she had read them, pointing out some faults in the English, she encouraged Caxton to proceed with the translation, which he did with renewed hope and vigour.

From Bruges he removed to Cologne, where it probably was that he first appeared as a printer, having learned the art, as he tells us, at considerable expense. His instructor, from whom he, no doubt, bought his first set of types, may have been one of Faust's workmen, who had been driven from Mentz in 1462, when the sack of the city by Adolphus of Nassau scattered the printers over the land. At Cologne, in 1471, Caxton finished the *History of Troy*; and it was printed at Bruges in 1474—the first English book that came from any press. For this, the first great work of his own pen, and the first *English* production of his press, he was bountifully rewarded by the "dreadful duchess," who had encouraged him to resume his task. The following year saw the printing of *The Game and Playe of the Chesse*. A fable about the origin of chess; an account of the offices, or powers, of the various pieces; and a prayer for the prosperity of Edward and England, make up the four treatises into which the *Game of Chesse* is divided.

When or how the happy idea occurred to Caxton of carrying press and types to England we do not know; but, soon after his sojourn in Cologne, 1476 we find him in the Almonry of Westminster, A.D. surrounded by the materials of his adopted craft, and directing the operations of his workmen. He united in himself nearly all the occupations con-

nected with the production and sale of books ; for in the infancy of printing there was no division of labour. Author, inkmaker, compositor, pressman, corrector, binder, publisher, bookseller—Caxton was all these.

Let us pass into his workshop, and see the early printers at their toil. Two huge frames of wood support the thick screws which work the pressing slabs. There sits the grave compositor before the cases full of type, the copy set up before him, and the grooved stick in his hand, which gradually fills with type to form a line. There is about his work nothing of that quick, unerring nip which marks the fingers of a modern compositor, as they fly among the type, and seize the very letter wanted in a trice. With quiet and steady pace, and many a thoughtful pause, his fingers travel through their task. The master printer in his furred gown moves through the room, directs the wedging of a page or sheet, and then resumes his high stool, to complete the reading of a proof pulled freshly from the press. The worker of the press has found the balls or dabbers, with which the form of types is inked, unfit for use. He must make fresh ones ; so down he sits with raw sheep-skin and carded wool, to stuff the ball and tie it round the handle of the dab. Till this is done, the press-work is at a stand. But there is no hurry in the Almonry ; and all the better this, for the imperfection of the machinery makes great care necessary on the part of the workmen. Then, suppose the proofs corrected, and the sheets, or pages rather, printed off, the binder's work begins. Strong and solid work was this old binding. When the leaves were sewed together in a frame—a rude original of that still used—they were hammered well to make them flat, and the back was thickly overlaid with paste and glue. Then came the enclosing of the paper in boards—veritable boards—thick pieces of wood like the panel of a door, covered outside with embossed

and gilded leather, and thickly studded with brass nails, whose ornamental heads shone in manifold rows. Thick brass corners and solid clasps completed the fortification of the book, which was made to last for centuries. Half a dozen such volumes used then to form an extensive and valuable library.

The book which is considered to have been the earliest work from the Westminster press is that entitled *The Dictes and Notable Wise Sayings of the Philosophers*. 1477  
A.D.

Upwards of one hundred works, translated and original, are assigned to the pen and the press of Caxton, who seems to have supplied nearly all the copy that was set up in the side-chapel, or disused Scriptorium, where his printing was done. His old business tact stood well to him in his publishing and bookselling transactions. We have still a hand-bill in his largest type, calling on all who wanted cheap books to come and buy at the Almonry. We find him, when undertaking the publication of the *Golden Legend*—a large, double-columned work of nearly five hundred pages, profusely illustrated with woodcuts—securing the promise of Lord Arundel to take a reasonable number of copies, and, moreover, to reward the printer with a yearly gift of venison—a buck in summer, and a doe in winter. Any work from Caxton's press is now worth far more than its weight in gold. The Osterley Park copy of the *Chesse* brought £1,950, and at the Ashburnham sale in 1897 the first edition of the *Dictes and Sayings* was sold for £1,320.

So, for seventeen years, Caxton laboured on at his English printing. The man who, at fifty-nine, had gone to Cologne to learn a new trade when his life's work seemed nearly done, still inked the types and worked the lever of the press when the weight of nearly fourscore years hung upon his frame.

But there came a day when the door of the printing office was shut, and the clank of the press was unheard within. William Caxton was dead. The schoolboy



of the Kentish Weald—the apprentice of Cheapside  
 —the keen mercer, well known in every Flem-  
 1491 ish stall—the trusted retainer of the house  
 A.D. of Burgundy—the gray-haired learner at  
 Cologne—the old printer of Westminster—  
 had played out his many parts. A sorrowful time  
 came for his faithful little band of printers, when, with  
 the glare of torches and the deep tolling of a bell, they  
 laid their hoary chief in the grave at St. Margaret's  
 Church, not far from the scene of his daily toils and  
 triumphs.

WYNKYN DE WORDE, a foreigner who had long  
 assisted Caxton at his press, kept up the good work,  
 and probably at first in the old place. There is  
 something touching in the devotion to his dead master  
 which he displays, in uniting the monogram of Caxton  
 with the blazing suns and clustering grapes that adorn  
 his own trade-device. Four hundred and eight works  
 are assigned to Wynkyn's press.

Another of Caxton's assistants—one RICHARD PYN-  
 SON, a native of Normandy—set up after a time in  
 business for himself, and throve so well, that he  
 received the somewhat valuable appointment of King's  
 Printer, being first on the long list of those who have  
 borne the title. Two hundred and twelve works are  
 said to have been printed by Pynson.

These were the men who printed our earliest English  
 books. Their types have been multiplied by millions,  
 and their presses by thousands. A little silver coin  
 can now buy the book for which Caxton charged a  
 piece of gold. Rejoicing, as we do, in the countless  
 blessings which the Press has given to Britain, let  
 us not forget that arched room in old Westminster,  
 where our earliest printer bent his silvered head over  
 the first proof-sheets of the *Dictes and Sayings*.

## CHAPTER II.

## SIR THOMAS MORE.

Born 1478 A.D. . . . . Beheaded 1535 A.D.

THOMAS MORE, who takes rank as the leading writer during this second era of our literature, was born in Milk Street, London, in 1478. Having learned some Latin in Threadneedle Street from Nicholas Hart, he became in his fifteenth year a page in the household of Cardinal Morton, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Here his sharp and ready wit attracted so much notice that the archbishop prophesied great things for him; and a dean of St. Paul's, one of the most noted scholars of the day, used to say that there was but one wit in England, and that was young Thomas More.

Devoted to the law by his good father, who was a justice in the King's Bench, More went to Oxford at seventeen; and here, in spite of the frowns of old Sir John, who dreaded lest the seductions of Homer and Plato might cast the grave sages of the law too much into the shade, he studied Greek under Grocyn and Linacre. And not only did he study it *con amore*, but he wrote to the university a powerful letter in defence of this new branch of learning, inveighing strongly against the Trojans, as the opponents of Greek had begun to call themselves. The leading Anti-Grecians were the senior clergy, who were too old or too lazy to sit down to the Greek alphabet and grammar; and who, besides, feared that if Greek and Hebrew were studied, the authority of the Latin Vulgate might be shaken. Either in Oxford or London, More met and won the friendship of the eminent Erasmus; and though the Dutchman was thirty and the English boy only seventeen, the attachment was mutual, and so strong, that it was only severed by death. At Oxford he wrote many English poems of considerable merit. These snowdrops of our litera-

ture, flowerets of a day hovering between winter and spring, might pass unnoticed among the gay blooms of a summer garden, but rising in pale beauty from the frozen ground, they are loved and welcomed as the harbingers of brighter days.

A few notes of his rapid rise must suffice here. Appointed reader—that is, lecturer—at Furnival's Inn,\* he soon became a popular lawyer; and we find him expounding not only the English law, but the works of St. Augustine. This mixture of theology and law was common in those days, when churchmen alone were chancellors. Running down occasionally into Essex, from his chambers near the Charter House, for a breath of country air, he fell in love with a lady named Jane Colt, whom he soon married. Under Henry the Seventh he became Under-Sheriff of London; and when miser Henry's spendthrift son wore the crown, he still rose in favour and in fortune. Employed on many continental missions, he became a Privy Councillor, Treasurer of the Exchequer, and in 1523 Speaker of the Commons. While filling the Speaker's chair he incurred the anger of Wolsey, who strove to injure him with the king. But the magnificent cardinal's own feet were then on slippery ground, and when in 1529 he fell with a great ruin, More succeeded him on the Woolsack.

We have pleasant domestic pictures of the home at Chelsea, embosomed among flowers and apple-trees, where the great lawyer lived in tranquil happiness with his wife and children. Thither often on a summer afternoon, after his day at court was done, he used to carry his friend Erasmus in his eight-oared barge. Pleasant was the talk at the six o'clock supper, and during the twilight stroll by the river. The king, too, often came out to dine with the Mores, sometimes uninvited, when the good but fussy lady of the house

\* The law-schools, such as Furnival's Inn and Lincoln's Inn, were so called because they were once used as the inns or town-houses of noblemen. Compare the French use of "hotel."

(not Jane Colt, but a second wife, Alice, seven years older than her husband) was in a desperate state until she had got her best scarlet gown put trimly on, to do honour to his highness. So familiar were the king and his chancellor that, as they walked in the garden, the royal arm often lay round More's neck. Yet, a few years later, that neck lay on the block by a royal order.

For more than two years More held the office of chancellor, discharging its high duties with singular purity. While it has been said of his predecessor, Wolsey, that no suitor need apply to him whose fingers were not tipped with gold, we read of More refusing heavy bribes, and sitting in an open hall to hear in person the petitions of the poor. The rock on which Wolsey had gone down lay ahead of More, who saw it with an anxious but undaunted heart. His mind was fixed to steer an honest course. The king, who was bent upon marrying Anne Boleyn, pressed the chancellor urgently for an opinion on the case, expecting, no doubt, that a man who owed his position to royal favour would not dare to thwart the royal will. But Henry was mistaken in his man. Rather than give an opinion which must have been against the king, More laid down the seals of his high office. A reverse of fortune so great seemed to cast no shadow upon his joyous 1532 spirit. Quietly reducing his style of living, A.D. he brightened his humble home with the same gentle, homely wit which had given lustre to his splendid days. Poor Mistress Alice, who had loved the grandeur of being a chancellor's lady, did not take so kindly to the change. But worse was yet to come. To thwart Henry the Eighth was a capital offence. More must yield or die. An attempt, soon abandoned, however, was made to involve him in the doom of the girl called "The Holy Maid of Kent." Summoned to Lambeth in April 1534, he left for the last time his well-loved Chelsea home. Turning, as

he hurried to his boat, he caught the last glimpse of its flower-beds through the wicket, beyond which he would not suffer his family to pass. His refusal to take an oath, which acknowledged the king's marriage with Anne Boleyn to be lawful, so enraged Henry that he was cast into the Tower, where he lay for a year. His letters to his daughter Margaret, written from that prison with a coal, are touching memorials of a great heart.

At last he was placed at the bar at Westminster on a charge, of which the leading points were his opposition to the royal marriage, and his refusal to acknowledge Henry as the head of the Church. He was found guilty and hurried back to prison. As he landed at the Tower wharf his daughter, Margaret Roper, rushing forward in spite of the halberds that shut him in, flung her arms round him, and kissed him amid the sobs and tears of all around.

The wit that in bachelor days lit the gloomy chambers in Lincoln's Inn, and added lustre to the hospitalities of Chelsea, shone bright as ever on the scaffold. As he climbed the timbers where he was to die, he said gaily to the lieutenant, "I pray you see me safe up; and for my coming down let me shift for myself." His head was fixed on the spikes of London Bridge; but his brave daughter Margaret caused it to be taken down, and when she died, many years after, it was buried in her grave. And so mouldered together into common dust as great a brain and as true a heart as ever England held.

More's fame as a writer rests on two works, written during that happy period of his life when, as Under-Sheriff of London and a busy lawyer, he enjoyed the sunshine of royal favour and the solid advantage of an income amounting to £4,000 or £5,000 a year. His *History of Richard the Third*, written about 1513, is not only the first English work deserving the name of history, but is further remarkable as being our earliest specimen of classical English prose.

The character of Richard the Third is here painted in the darkest colours. But More's *Utopia* has had a wider fame. In flowing Latin he describes the happy state of an island which is discovered by one Raphael Hythloday (learner of trifles), a supposed companion of Amerigo Vespucci. The place is called Utopia, which simply means "Nowhere," from οὐ τόπος. A republic, of which the foundation idea is borrowed from Plato, although the details are More's, has its seat in this favoured land. The Utopian ships lie safe within the horns of the crescent-shaped island; for no enemy can steer through the rocks that guard the harbour's mouth. Every house in the fifty-four walled cities has a large garden; and these houses are exchanged by lot every ten years. All the islanders learn agriculture; but all have, besides, a certain trade, at which six hours' work, and no more, must be done every day. There are in Utopia no taverns, no fashions ever changing, few laws, and no lawyers. There, war is considered a brutal thing; hunting, a degrading thing, fit only for butchers; and finery, a foolish thing—for who that could see sun or star would care for jewels. This work was composed shortly after More's return from the Continent, whither he was sent on a mission to Bruges in the summer of 1514. His other works are chiefly theological treatises, written against the Lutheran doctrines, and Latin epigrams, modelled after those of his friend Erasmus. He stands first, too, in the roll of our parliamentary orators, but, unfortunately, of his speeches we know next to nothing.

A LETTER FROM SIR THOMAS MORE TO HIS WIFE.  
(1528.)

Maistres Alyce, in my most harty wise I recommend me to you; and whereas I am enfourmed by my son Heron of the losse of our barnes and of our neighbours also, with all the corn that was therein, albeit (saving God's pleasure) it is gret pitie of so much good corne lost, yet sith it hath liked hym to sende us such a chaunce, we must and are bounden, not only to be content, but also to be glad of his visitacion. He sente us all that we have loste: and sith he hath



by such a chaunce taken it away againe, his pleasure be fulfilled. Let us never grudge ther at, but take it in good worth, and hartely thank him, as well for adversitie as for prosperitie. And peradventure we have more cause to thank him for our losse, then for our winning; for his wisdome better seeth what is good for vs then we do our selves. Therefore I pray you be of good chere, and take all the howsold with you to church, and there thanke God, both for that he hath given us, and for that he hath taken from us, and for that he hath left us, which if it please hym he can encrease when he will. And if it please hym to leave us yet lesse, at his pleasure be it.

I pray you to make some good ensearche what my poore neighbours have loste, and bid them take no thought therfore: for and I shold not leave myself a sponse, there shal no pore neighbour of mine bere no losse by any chaunce happened in my house. I pray you be with my children and your household merry in God. And devise some what with your frendes, what waye wer best to take, for provision to be made for corne for our household, and for sede thys yere comming, if ye thinke it good that we kepe the ground stil in our handes. And whether ye think it good that we so shall do or not, yet I think it were not best sodenlye thus to leave it all up, and to put away our folk of our farme till we have somewhat advised us thereon. How beit if we have more nowe then ye shall nede, and which can get them other maisters, ye may then discharge us of them. But I would not that any man were sodenly sent away he wote nere wether.

At my comming hither I perceived none other but that I shold tary stil with the Kinges Grace. But now I shal (I think) because of this chance, get leave this next weke to come home and se you: and then shall we further devyse together uppon all thinges, what order shal be best to take. And thus as hartely fare you well with all our children as ye can wishe. At Woodestok the thirde daye of Septembre by the hand of

your louing husbände,  
THOMAS MORE Knight.

### CHAPTER III.

WILLIAM TYNDALE.

Born about 1484 A.D. . . . . Strangled 1536 A.D.

WILLIAM TYNDALE is celebrated among our writers as a translator of the New Testament into English. What Wycliffe had done for his countrymen in the fourteenth century, Tyndale undertook during the troubled reign of the eighth Henry.

Of Tyndale's birth and boyhood we know positively nothing beyond the statement of Fox, that he was born on the borders of Wales, and brought up from child-

hood at Oxford. Graduating at that university, he went to spend some time at Cambridge. His powers as a linguist and his great love for the Scriptures are specially noted by his early biographer. The next scene of his life was the house of Sir John Walsh, a knight of Gloucestershire, who employed him as tutor to his children. This honourable but troublesome office was most creditably filled by the Oxford man, who met at the hospitable board of the good knight most of the leading country clergymen. The talk naturally turned very often upon the religious opinions of such men as Luther and Erasmus; and in these conversations Tyndale took a most conspicuous part, freely declaring his sympathy with the Reformers, and his desire—nay, his purpose—that every English ploughboy should soon know the Scriptures. Resigning his tutorship to seek a safer place, he preached for some time at Bristol and through the surrounding country, and then went to London, his brain bursting with a mighty plan. He would translate the New Testament from the original Greek, and thus feed the hungry English people with the bread of life.

Wycliffe's Bible had become, in the changes which more than one hundred stirring years had brought upon the English language, a book unreadable but by a learned few. Disappointed in his attempt to secure the protection of Tunstall, the learned Bishop of London, Tyndale found a refuge in the house of Alderman Humphrey Monmouth, a rich London merchant, whose heart was in the good work. This honest man, keeping the poor scholar in his house for six months, would gladly have seen his friend fare better than on sodden meat and small beer. But Tyndale would, if given his own way, take nothing else. The kindness of Monmouth did not stop here, for he made Tyndale an allowance of £10 a year, which enabled him to set in earnest about his grand design. Travelling into Germany, Tyndale saw and talked with Luther, and settled finally at Cologne. There he finished his

*Translation of the New Testament.* The first edition, printed probably at Worms, was published in 1525 or 1526. An improved and altered version appeared in 1534. The run upon the book, both on the Continent and in England, was very great. Copies poured by hundreds from the foreign presses into England. In vain the terrors of the Church were threatened and inflicted upon the sellers and owners of Tyndale's Testament. The translator's brother and two others were sentenced, for distributing copies, to pay a fine of £18,840, os. 10d.; and, moreover, had to ride, facing the horse's tail, with many copies of the condemned volume tacked to their clothes, as far as Cheapside, where a fire blazed to burn the books. Conscious how utterly feeble such exhibitions were as a means of checking the new doctrines, Tunstall applied to Sir Thomas More for help; and More, a devoted member of the Roman Church, wrote many fierce and bitter things of Tyndale and Tyndale's works.

*The Five Books of Moses*, translated from the Hebrew partly by Tyndale, were printed at Marburg, in Hesse, in 1530; and in the following year the same industrious pen produced an *English version of the Book of Jonah*. Such work, added to the composition of many English tracts for sale in England, written in defence of his religious opinions, filled the days, and many of the nights too, of the writer. Nor was the wear and tear of body and brain by night and day all that Tyndale gave to the service. Without straining the figure far, we can truly say that his Bible was written with his blood. One Henry Philips, English student at Louvain, betrayed him in 1534 into the hands of the Emperor's officers at Brussels; near which  
 1536 city, in the castle of Vilvorde, he was kept a  
 A.D. close prisoner for eighteen months. Then, tried  
 and condemned for heresy, he was strangled  
 at the stake, and his dead body was burned to ashes. His dying words were, "O Lord, open the King of England's eyes!"

Tyndale's English is considered by the best authorities to be remarkably pure and forcible. His New Testament ranks among our classics. Tyndale also possessed such a knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew tongues as was rare in his day ; and this secures the fidelity of the translation.

#### FROM TYNDALE'S NEW TESTAMENT.

Jesus answered and sayde : A certayne man descended from Jerusalem into Jericho. And fell into the hondes off theves whych robbed hym off his rayment and wonded hym and departed levyng him halfe deed. And yt chaused that there cam a certayne preste that same waye and saw hym and passed by. And lyke wyse a levite when he was come neye to the place went and loked on hym and passed by. Then a certayne Samaritane as he iorneyed cam neye vnto him and behelde hym and had compassion on hym and cam to hym and bounde vppe hys wondes and poured in wyne and oyle and layed hym on his beaste and brought hym to a common hostry, and drest him. And on the morowe when he departed he toke out two pence and gave them to the host and said unto him, Take care of him and whatsoever thou spendest above this when I come agayne I will recompence the. Which nowe of these thre thynkest thou was neighbour unto him that fell into the theves hondes ? And he answered : He that shewed mercy on hym. Then sayd Jesus vnto hym, Goo and do thou lyke wyse.

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### CHAPTER IV.

THOMAS CRANMER, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

Born 1489 A.D. . . . . Burned 1556 A.D.

AFTER some years of study, sporting, and teaching at Cambridge, Thomas Cranmer, a Fellow of Jesus College, born in 1489, at Aslacton, in Nottinghamshire, went on a visit to Waltham Abbey, in Essex, where lived a Mr. Cressy, the father of some of his college pupils. It happened that King Henry the Eighth, returning from a royal progress, stayed a night at Waltham ; and, according to the custom of the day, his suite were lodged in the various houses of the place. Cranmer met Fox, the royal almoner, and Gardiner, the royal secretary, at supper with his

friend Cressy ; and when the table-talk turned upon the king's divorce, which was then the great topic of the time, he suggested that the question should be referred to the Universities of Europe. "The man has got the right sow by the ear," said Henry next day, when he heard of the remark. And from that day Cranmer was a made man.

It is not our purpose here to trace the great career of Cranmer as a politician and a churchman. His literary character and works alone claim our notice. The part which he played in the shifting scenes of the English Reformation may be read in the annals of our Tudor Sovereigns. In March 1533 he was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury, qualifying his oath of obedience to the Pope with the statement, "that he did not intend by this oath to restrain himself from anything that he was bound to either by his duty to God or the king or the country."

After escaping, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, the double danger arising from the king's capricious ferocity and the hatred of the anti-reform party, Cranmer became, during the reign of Henry's gentle son Edward, a leader of the English Reformation and a founder of the English Church. A few years later,

under Mary, having been induced in the gloom  
1556 of a prison cell to sign a denial of his Protes-  
A.D. tant belief—a deed which he afterwards utterly  
repealed—he underwent at Oxford that bap-  
tism of fire which has purified his memory from every  
stain.

There is a book which ranks with our Bible and *The Pilgrim's Progress* as containing some of the finest specimens of undefiled English to be found in the whole range of our literature. It is *The Book of Common Prayer*, used by the Episcopal Churches of Great Britain and Ireland. To Cranmer the merit of compiling this beautiful service-book is chiefly due. The old Latin Missal, used in various forms all over England, was taken to pieces ; many parts of it were

discarded, especially the legends and the prayers to saints, and what remained was recast in an English mould. The Litany, differing only in a single petition from that now read, was added as a new feature of the service. By an Act of Parliament passed in 1549, all ministers were ordered to use the Book of Common Prayer in the celebration of Divine service. And ever since, that sweet and solemn music of King Edward's Liturgy has been heard in our lands, rising through the sacred silence of many churches when the Sabbath bells have ceased to chime.

A book of *Twelve Homilies*, or sermons, was also prepared under the superintendence of Cranmer, for the use of those clergymen who were not able to write sermons for themselves. The need of such a work shows us how far behind the lower clergy then were, even in the knowledge and use of their own tongue. Four of these Homilies are ascribed to the pen of Cranmer.

His third great literary work was his superintendence of a revised translation of the Bible, which is commonly called either *Cranmer's Bible* from his share in its publication, or the *Great Bible* from its comparative size. This edition appeared in April 1539, with a second edition in 1540. The text was Coverdale's version, with a preface by Cranmer.

Cranmer's extant original works are very many, and possess considerable merit ; but his literary reputation will always rest mainly on the fact that he was what we may call editor-in-chief of those three great works of the English Reformation already noticed—the Book of Common Prayer, the Twelve Homilies, and the Great Bible.



## CHAPTER V.

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY.

Born about 1517 A.D. . . . . Beheaded 1547 A.D.

FOR two reasons the brilliant but unhappy Surrey holds a foremost place in the annals of our English literature. He was, so far as we know, the earliest writer of English blank verse, and he gave to English poetry a refinement and polish for which we search in vain among his predecessors.

His father was the third Duke of Norfolk ; and his mother, Elizabeth, was a daughter of the great house of Buckingham. But Surrey had more from Heaven than noble birth could give, for the sacred fire of poetry burned in his breast. Of his boyhood we know nothing certain. Nursed in the lap of luxury, and the darling of a splendid court, he yet won a soldier's laurels both in Scotland and in France. But his fame was not to be carved out only with a sword. Traveling into Italy, he "tasted the sweet and stately measures and stile of the Italian poesie," and returned home to recast in the mould of his accomplished mind the metres of his native land.

At home, however, he became involved in many troubles. Some of these resulted from the escapades of his own youthful folly. He was once imprisoned for rioting in the streets at night and breaking windows with a cross-bow. But other and graver evils came. In the latter days of the reign, when "Bluff King Hal" had become "Bloated King Hal," and all the courtly circle saw that their monarch was sinking into the grave, there arose a keen contest between the noble houses of Howard and Seymour. The element of religious strife added to the bitterness of the feeling which grew up between these two rival families ; for the Howards were Roman Catholics, and the Earl of Hertford, the head of the Scymours, was

a secret friend of the Reformation. The grand aim of Hertford was to secure the protectorship of his young nephew Prince Edward when the old king was dead. Surrey and his father Norfolk, standing in the way, must perish. The thing was easy to do; the name of Howard was poison to the king, who had married one of the house as his fifth wife. Arrested for treason, the father and the son, each ignorant of the other's capture, were hurried by Dec. 12, different ways to the Tower. Surrey was tried 1546 at Guildhall on a flimsy charge of treason, A.D. supported chiefly by the fact that he had quartered the arms of Edward the Confessor on his shield with those of his own family. This was tortured into a proof that he aimed at the throne. He had long worn these arms, he said, even in the king's own sight; and the heralds had allowed him to do so in virtue of his royal descent. In spite of these simple truths, and the noble eloquence of his defence, the poet was doomed to die; and on the 21st of January 1547 his bright hair, all dabbled in blood, swept the dust of the scaffold. Eight days later Henry died, just in time to save from the block the head of Norfolk, whose execution had been arranged for the following morning.

Surrey's literary merits have been already noticed. Dr. Nott, who edited Surrey's works, claims for the poet the honour of having revolutionized English poetry, by substituting lines of fixed length, where the accents fall evenly, for the rhythmical lines of earlier poets, in which the number of syllables is irregular, and the equality of the lines requires to be kept up by certain pauses or cadences of the voice. But recent writers have shown that this theory cannot be maintained. In the words of Dr. Craik, "The true merit of Surrey is, that he restored to our poetry a correctness, polish, and general spirit of refinement, such as it had not known since Chaucer's time; and of which, therefore, in the language as now spoken,

there was no previous example whatever." Like Chaucer, he caught his inspiration from the great bards of Italy, and sat especially at the feet of Petrarch. In his purification of English verse, he did good service by casting out those clumsy Latin words with which the lines of even Dunbar are heavily clogged.

The poems of Petrarch ring the changes in exquisite music on his love for Laura. So the love-verses of Surrey are filled with the praises of the fair Geraldine, whom Horace Walpole has tried to identify with Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald, a daughter of the Earl of Kildare. If this be so, Geraldine was only a girl of thirteen when the poet, already married to Frances Vere for six years, sang of her beauty and her virtue. It is no unlikely thing that Surrey, an instinctive lover of the beautiful, was smitten with a deep admiration of the fresh, young, girlish face of one, as Longfellow says—

"Standing with reluctant feet,  
Where the brook and river meet,  
Womanhood and childhood fleet."

Such a feeling could exist—it often has existed—in the poet's breast, free from all mingling of sin, and casting no shadow of reproach upon a husband's loyalty. The whole love poetry of the Elizabethan was "fictitious," a literary mode with no necessary basis of fact.

Surrey's chief work was *the translation into English blank verse of the Second and Fourth books of Virgil's "Æneid."* Some think that he borrowed this verse from Italy; Dr. Nott supposes that he got the hint from Gavin Douglas, the Scottish translator of Virgil. Wherever the gem was found, Surrey has given it to English literature; a rough gem, indeed, at first, and shining with an uncertain gleam, but soon, beneath Shakespeare's magic hand, leaping forth to the sight of men, a diamond of the first water.

Surrey is sometimes said to have written also the

first English *Sonnets*,\* but the honour properly belongs to Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542).

## FROM SURREY'S TRANSLATION OF VIRGIL.

(FOURTH BOOK.)

But now the wounded quene with heaue care  
Through out the vaines doth nourishe ay the plage,  
Surprised with blind flame, and to her minde  
Gan to resort the prowes of the man  
And honor of his race, whiles on her brest  
Imprinted stake his wordes and forme of face,  
Ne to her lymmes care graunteth quiet rest.  
The next morowe with Phoebus lampe the erthe  
Alightned clere, and eke the dawninge daye  
The shadowe danke gan from the pole remove.

## SONNET ON SPRING.

(MODERN SPELLING.)

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,  
With green hath clad the hill and eke the vale.  
The nightingale with feathers new she sings;  
The turtle to her make hath told her tale.  
Summer is come, for every spray now springs;  
The hart hath hung his old head on the pale,  
The buck in brake his winter coat he flings;  
The fishes flete with new repaired scale;  
The adder all her slough away she flings;  
The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale;  
The busy bee her honey now she mings;  
Winter is worn that was the flowers bale.  
And thus I see among these pleasant things  
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs.

## CHAPTER VI.

## OTHER WRITERS OF THE SECOND ERA.

(1476-1558.)

## POETS.

ROBERT HENRYSON (1425-1506) was chief schoolmaster at Dunfermline about the end of the fifteenth century.

\* The Sonnet is borrowed from the Italian. It is a poem of fourteen lines, two of its four stanzas having four lines each, and the others three lines. The rhymes are arranged according to a particular rule.

His longest poem is the *Testament of Fair Creseide*, in which Chaucer's tale of *Troilus and Creseide* is continued. The fine ballad of *Robin and Makyne*, which may be found in Percy's *Reliques*, is ascribed to this accomplished man. *The Moral Fables of Æsop* and *The Garment of Gude Ladyes* are his chief remaining works.

WILLIAM DUNBAR, placed by Sir Walter Scott at the head of Scottish poets, and perhaps, therefore, deserving more prominence than he receives here, is thought to have been a native of East Lothian, and to have been closely allied to the noble house of March. This Chaucer of the North graduated at St. Andrews as M.A. in 1479. Then, assuming the gray robe of the Franciscans, he travelled for some years in Britain and France, preaching and begging, according to the custom of the friars; and he afterwards visited the English and some of the Continental courts, as an *attaché* to certain Scottish embassies. The many-coloured life he thus spent is clearly reflected in his works, which show remarkable knowledge of human nature and society. Pensions, rising at last to £80, rewarded the public services of the poet. Spending his last days in the irksome bondage of a court life, and pining for a chance of escape from his gilded cage, he died about 1520, having reached the age of sixty years.

Dunbar's leading poems are three—*The Thistle and the Rose*; *The Golden Targe*; and, finest of all, *The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins*.

The first-named commemorates the marriage of King James the Fourth with the English princess Margaret in 1503—a historical event which paved the way for the close union of two sister lands.

In the poem of *The Golden Targe* the sleeping bard is attacked by Venus and her train. Reason, holding over him a golden shield, repels all assailants, until blinded by a powder which Presence flings in his eyes. The poor poet then becomes the captive of



LAWMER PREACHING AT ST. PAUL'S CROSS.

*From the picture by George Hayter.*





Lady Beauty, and is much tormented until the scene vanishes with a clap of thunder, and he awakes amid the song of birds and the perfume of bright May flowers.

*The Dance* describes a vision, beheld during a trance into which the poet fell on a winter night. In presence of Mahoun (that is, Mohammed, or the Devil, for these were often interchangeable terms about the days of the Crusades) Pride leads on the other deadly sins in a fearful dance. Each sin is represented by a distinct personification, painted in horror's darkest hues, and lighted in the dance by the lurid flames through which he leaps.

GAVIN DOUGLAS was the third son of the fifth Earl of Angus, well known in Scottish story as Archibald Bell-the-Cat. He was born about 1474. Having finished his education at Paris, he rose by many minor steps to be Abbot of Aberbrothock, and was afterwards consecrated Bishop of Dunkeld. But for the Pope's refusal to sanction his appointment, he would have become Archbishop of St. Andrews.

The work for which Douglas is most celebrated is his *poetical translation of Virgil's "Æneid" into the Scottish dialect*, remarkable as being the first rendering of a Latin classic into our native tongue. Two long allegories—*King Hart* and *The Palace of Honour*—were also written by this poet-priest. The distinctive feature of his language is the abundant use of words from the Latin and French, an innovation by which the foreign-bred scholar strove to lift the diction of his poems above the homely level of the earlier bards. Original prologues stand before each book, bright with pictures of nature; to which, no doubt, the lovely wooded hills among which the Tay winds at Dunkeld contributed not a little of their exquisite colouring.

Flodden was a fatal day for the house of Douglas. The Master of Angus and his brother William lay dead on the Cheviot heather. The old earl, whose wise caution had been rudely repelled by the wilful

king before the battle, retired to Galloway to die. And the gentler scholar, Gavin, had soon to flee to the English Court, and in September 1522 died in London of the plague.

ALEXANDER BARCLAY, who died in 1552, flourished in the reigns of Henry the Seventh and his son. He is remembered as the writer of a poem, *The Ship of Fools*, of which the name shows it to be a satirical allegory. It was founded on the German of Brandt.

STEPHEN HAWES, writer of the *Pastime of Pleasure*, and groom of the chamber to Henry the Seventh, was a Suffolk man. His skill in versifying, combined with his knowledge of French and Italian, made him a great favourite at court.

JOHN SKELTON, a coarse, bold satirist, was in his prime in the latter days of Henry the Seventh and the earlier days of Henry the Eighth. In a short-lined poem, called *Colin Clout*, he belabours the clergy unmercifully with cudgel-words, making no choice of weapons, but striking with the first that came to hand. He is one of that useful band of satirists, among whom we reckon also Langland and Heywood, whose trenchant lines cut deep into the foul growths of monkish ignorance and lust. So vigorous was the assault of Skelton, that even the magnificent Wolsey found it necessary to turn on the strong-voiced poet, who was forced to shelter himself in the sanctuary of Westminster. There he died in 1529.

JOHN HEYWOOD, styled the Epigrammatist, who flourished during the reign of Henry the Eighth, was remarkable for his *Interludes*, or short satirical plays, in which, as in *Colin Clout*, the clergy suffer tremendously.

SIR THOMAS WYATT was born in 1503 in Kent, and was educated at Cambridge. His elegant scholarship and quick wit, added to a fine person and remarkable skill with lance and rapier, speedily won for him a brilliant reputation. But his life was not all sunshine : he was named as one of the lovers of Anne Boleyn, whose praise he had sung in his verses ; and for this

and other reasons he was cast into prison. He was afterwards restored to royal favour, and being employed on some mission by the king, he overheated himself in riding on a summer day, took fever, and died at Sherbourne in Dorsetshire in 1542. He aided his friend Surrey in introducing a new spirit and new forms of verse into English poetry.

SIR DAVID LYNDSEY of the Mount, born about 1490, was page of honour to young James the Fifth, by whom he was knighted. He was employed as envoy to Holland and Denmark, and was for two years member of Parliament for Cupar, in his native county. He died in 1555 at his seat, the Mount, in Fifeshire. His chief work is the *Play of the Three Estates*, a dramatic satire on the king, lords, and commons, first acted in 1540 before the king. His *Squire Meldrum*, last of the metrical romances, is lively but licentious. *The Monarchie*, opening with the Creation and closing with the Day of Judgment, is valuable for its spirited account of Scotland. A smaller piece, full of pungent satire upon the court, is called the *Complaynt of the King's Papingo* (peacock or parrot).

NICHOLAS UDALL, author of the earliest existing English comedy, was born in Hampshire in 1505, and was educated at Oxford. Udall was master of Eton, where his cruel floggings won for him a more dubious kind of renown than his learning or his wit. His comedy of *Ralph Royster Doyster*, in five acts, was written about 1541, for the Christmas performance at Eton. Udall died in 1556.

#### PROSE WRITERS.

ROBERT FABIAN and EDWARD HALL are the earliest writers of history in English prose. The former, a London alderman, who died in 1513, wrote a chronicle of English history, called the *Concordance of Histories*; in which fact and fiction are industriously heaped together with honest, well-meaning dullness. The latter, a lawyer, who died in 1547, gives us a more

valuable book in his *History of the Houses of York and Lancaster*.

LORD BERNERS, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Governor of Calais under Henry the Eighth, *translated* into vigorous English prose Jean Froissart's brilliant pictures of chivalry.

JOHN FISHER.—Let us not forget the English sermons of the Bishop of Rochester who bore this name. Fisher, born in 1459, lived a long life in steady adherence to the Church of Rome. In the bloody year 1535 he was tried and convicted on a charge of denying that Henry the Eighth could be the head of the Church. As the poor old bishop lay in the Tower, the Pope sent him a cardinal's hat. "Ha!" said the king, "Paul may send him a hat, but I will leave him never a head to wear it!" The threat was executed on the 22nd of June, fourteen days before his friend More met the same fate on the same charge.

SIR THOMAS ELYOT, the friend of Leland and of More, was eminent as a medical man during the reign of Henry the Eighth. He wrote a work called *The Castle of Health*, which contains much good advice about food and such matters. Of more importance, however, was his educational work, *The Governor*, published in 1531, in which he recommends that children should be taught to speak Latin from their infancy, and that music, drawing, and carving (that is, sculpture) should have a place in a scheme of enlightened education.

JOHN BELLENDEN, Archdeacon of Moray and a Lord of Session under Queen Mary, produced in 1533, by order of James the Fifth, a *translation of Hector Boece's History of Scotland*. This is considered the earliest existing specimen of Scottish prose literature. An anonymous work, called *The Complaynt of Scotland*, printed at Paris about 1548, was the first *original* work in Scottish prose. Bellenden also *translated the first Five Books of Livy*, writing, besides, *Poems, Epistles to James the Fifth*, and a *Sketch of Scottish Topography*.

JOHN LELAND, the father of our archæological literature, was born in London. Passing from St. Paul's school, he studied at Cambridge, Oxford, and Paris, and then became a chaplain to Henry the Eighth. His powers as a linguist were remarkable. His great work is the *Itinerary*, in which he gives the results of his many antiquarian tours. Insane during his last two years, he died in his native city in 1552.

HUGH LATIMER, famous as a leader of the English Reformation, was born in Leicestershire about 1485, received his education at Cambridge, and became Bishop of Worcester in 1535. When the Act of the Six Articles was passed, he resigned in disgust, and spent the last six years of the reign of Henry the Eighth in prison. Liberated by Edward the Sixth, he devoted himself earnestly to the work of preaching. His style—many of his *Sermons* and *Letters* remain—is remarkable for its homeliness and its wealth of droll anecdotes and illustrations. He was too great a champion of the truth to escape the flames that Mary lit. Ridley and he were burned together at Oxford in 1555. His were the ever-memorable words, spoken ere his lips were shrivelled into ashes, "We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out."

MILES COVERDALE, Bishop of Exeter, was born in Yorkshire in 1488. His changeful life extended far into the succeeding century (1568). His name is imperishably associated with the story of the English Bible; for in 1535 he published, with a dedication to the king, the first printed translation of the *whole Bible*. He was also much engaged in the preparation of the Great, or Cranmer's Bible (1540); and when exiled in the time of Mary, he took part in the Geneva translation, printed there in 1557 and 1560. He is supposed to have died in London in 1568.

JOHN BALE, Bishop of Ossory, in Ireland, was born in Suffolk in 1495. He is chiefly remarkable for a Latin work, *Lives of Eminent Writers of Great Britain*,



the list beginning with Japheth! Many interludes and scriptural dramas were also written by him, besides a *Chronicle of Lord Cobham's Trial and Death*. He died at Canterbury in 1563.

JOHN KNOX, the great reformer of Scotland, cannot be omitted here, although his literary works were few. *A History of the Scottish Reformation* was the chief of these. Born at or near Haddington in 1505, he received his education at Glasgow under John Major, became the leader of the Scottish Reformation, and died at Edinburgh in 1572.

GEORGE CAVENDISH is remarkable as the writer of a very truthful and unaffected *Life of Cardinal Wolsey*, whose gentleman-usher he was, and whom he served to the last with devoted fidelity. This work, from which Shakespeare has largely drawn in his play of *Henry the Eighth*, was not printed until 1641. Cavendish, who was also a member of the royal household, died in 1561 or 1562.

SIR JOHN CHEKE, who was born in 1514, is more worthy of remembrance for his success in fostering the study of Greek at Cambridge, when the hated novelty was in danger of being trampled to death by an opposing party, than for his contributions to English literature. A pamphlet called *The Hurt of Sedition* is his only original English work. He left also some manuscript translations from the Greek. He died in 1557.

JOHN FOXE, born at Boston in 1516, is distinguished as the author of the *Acts and Monuments of the Church*, which is familiarly known as *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. His education was received at Oxford, where he held a fellowship which he resigned in 1545. At one time he was all but starving in London; at another he had to flee for his life to the Continent from the persecutions of Mary's reign. His great work occupied him for eleven years, and the first English edition (folio) appeared in 1563. Under Elizabeth he became a prebend of Salisbury, after declining many other offers of promotion in the Church. He died in 1587.

## THIRD ERA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF ELIZABETH IN 1558 A.D.  
TO THE SHUTTING OF THE THEATRES  
IN 1648 A.D.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE PLAYS AND PLAYERS OF OLD ENGLAND.

THE *Miracle Play* or *Mystery*, acted in churches and convents, either by the clergy themselves or under their immediate direction, was the earliest form of the English drama. The only knowledge of Bible history possessed by the rude and ignorant masses of the people during the later centuries of the Middle Ages was got from these plays. The subjects chosen were the most striking stories in the Book—such as the Creation, the Fall, the Deluge, Abraham's Trial, the Crucifixion; and these were dramatized with little regard to the sacred and awful nature of the themes. Three platforms rose, one above another, forming a triple stage. The topmost, representing the heaven of heavens, was occupied by a group of actors, who personated the Almighty and His angels. Below stood those who played the parts of the redeemed. Upon the lowest, which imitated the world, the deeds of men were represented; and not far from the side of this lowest stage there smoked a fiery gulf, which stood for hell. The comic element must not be forgotten; for the poor yokels who gathered to be taught

and amused would yawn and sleep if there were no broad jokes and boisterous fun to relieve the solemnities of the performance. And of all beings whom should these priests of the Church choose to be their first comedian but the Prince of Darkness! He it was who, equipped according to the vulgar notion with hoofs and horns and tail, created the fun by which the congregation was kept awake and in good temper. It took a week to act some of these Mysteries; and there are instances in which the whole circle of religious doctrine and history was traversed in this barbarous fashion. All the countries of western and south-western Europe, as well as Britain, have some remains of the old Mystery literature.

Gradually these Miracle Plays changed into the *Moralities*, which formed the second stage in the development of the English drama. Here, instead of Scripture characters, we find abstract qualities personified and strutting in varied garments on the stage. Noah and Abraham have given place to Justice, Mercy, Gluttony, and Vice. The amount of morality learned by the audiences who gathered round such actors cannot have been great; but we must respect to some extent the intention of the authors who produced these plays, and meant them to do good. Students in the universities, boys at the public schools, town councillors, or brethren of the various trade guilds, acted these Moralities on certain great days and state occasions. An open scaffold knocked up in the market-place, or a platform of planks drawn upon wheels, served as a stage, on which such pieces as *Hit the Nail on the Head*, or *The Hog hath Lost his Pearl*, were acted by these dramatic amateurs. The Devil of the Miracle Plays was still retained, to aid the Vice in doing the comic business of the Moralities. The fun most relished by such audiences as Old England could then produce consisted in calling bad names and hitting hard blows. Such contests of tongue and fist went on continually between the Devil and the





EDMUND SPENSER READING THE "FAIRIE QUEENE" TO SIR WALTER RALPH.

*From the picture by John Claxton.*

(By permission of W. B. Burdette, U. P.)

Vice ; but in many cases the former carried off his victim in triumph at the close of the performance.

Thus the two branches of our drama sprang from one and the same root. A Morality, broken in two, supplies the elements of both. Its serious portions form the groundwork of English tragedy ; its lighter scenes, of English comedy. But between the Moralities and the appearance of our earliest Comedy came the *Interludes*, which strongly resembled our modern Farce. Of these John Heywood was the most noted writer. He lived in the reign of Henry the Eighth whose idle hours he often amused with his music and his wit. The controversial spirit of the Reformation age deeply penetrated the nascent drama. Moralities and Interludes abound, which are just so many rockets, charged with jest and sneer and railing, that the opposing sides launched fiercely at each other in the heat of the religious war.

An idea of the *Interludes* may be formed from a single specimen. *The four P's* describes in doggerel verse a contest carried on by a Pedlar, a Palmer, a Pardoner, and a 'Poticary, in which each character tries to tell the greatest lie. On they go, heaping up the most outrageous falsehoods they can frame, until the chance hit of the Pardoner, who says that he never saw a woman out of temper, strikes the others dumb. This tremendous lie nobody can beat, so the Pardoner wins the prize.

*Ralph Royster Doyster*, a dramatic picture of London life, written about 1541, by Nicholas Udall, is—so far as we know—the first English comedy. And the old British story of *Ferrex and Porrex*, dramatized by Sackville and Norton, which was acted in 1561 by the students of the Inner Temple, is considered the earliest tragedy in the language. The introduction of human characters, instead of the walking allegories that trod the Moral stage, is the grand distinctive feature which marks the rise of the true English drama. There is something in the very words *abstraction* and *allegory*



to make men yawn ; and few were deeply moved at the sufferings or triumphs of Justice and Peace. But when real life was put upon the stage—when crimes were perpetrated, marriages arranged, sufferings endured, difficulties overcome by actors who bore the names and did the deeds of human flesh and blood—a new interest was given to our plays, and the audience wept and laughed not *at* the performance, but *with* the performers.

By a sudden and enormous stride, the English drama reached the magnificent creations of Shakespeare in a few years after the production of its earliest specimens. Not half a century after the court of Henry the Eighth had been amused with the grotesque drolleries of John Heywood, Elizabeth and her maids of honour assembled to laugh at the fortunes and misfortunes of old Jack Falstaff, and to tremble in the shadow of the finest tragedies the English stage has ever seen.

We must not suppose, however, that the Theatres kept pace with the wonderful improvement of the Drama. To form a true idea of the stage on which the Elizabethan plays were acted, we must carry our recollection back to those yellow-painted wooden caravans that travel round the country fairs, and supply the delighted rustics, in exchange for their pennies, with a tragedy full of ghosts and murder, and thrilling with single combats between valiant warriors in tin armour, who fight with broadswords made of old iron hoops. The travelling stage was often set up in the courtyard of an inn. A wooden erection—little better than what we call a shed—there sheltered the company and their audience. When in 1576 the first licensed theatre was opened at Blackfriars in London, it was merely a round wooden wall or building, enclosing a space open to the sky. The stage, indeed, was covered with a roof of thatch ; but upon the greater part of the *house*—as in modern days we call the spectators—the sun shone and the rain fell without let or hindrance.

The rude attempts at scenery in such theatres as the Rose and the Globe, which were among the leading London houses, make us smile, who have witnessed the gorgeous scenic triumphs of modern managers. Some faded tapestry or poorly daubed canvas hung round the timbers of the stage, at the back of which ran a gallery—eight or ten feet high—to hold those actors who might be supposed to speak from castle walls, windows, high rocks, or other lofty places. A change of scene was denoted by hanging out in view of the spectators a placard with the name of the place—Padua, Athens, or Paris—painted on it. A further stretch of imagination was required from the assembly when the removal of a dingy throne and the setting down of a rough table with drinking vessels were supposed to turn a palace into a tavern; or the exchange of a pasteboard rock for a thorn branch was expected to delude all into the belief that they saw no longer a pebbly shore, but a leafy forest. An illustration of this scenic poverty may be found in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, where the Athenian tradesmen rehearse a play, and act it before Duke Theseus. Funny as it seems, the picture was drawn from the realities of the author's day. The play of *Pyramus and Thisbe* requires the introduction of a wall upon the stage, that the lovers may whisper their vows through a chink in its masonry. So Snout the tinker is daubed with plaster, and coming on the stage, announces to the audience that he is to be considered the Wall; and for a chink, he forms a circle with thumb and fingers, through which the appointment to meet at Ninny's tomb is made by the ardent lovers. Then in comes one with a lantern, a thorn bush, and a dog, who calls himself the Man in the moon, and proceeds to light the midnight scene. An unbelieving critic who sits among the onlookers suggests that the man, the bush, and the dog should get into the lantern, since the appearance of the Man in the moon carrying the moon in which he lived was likely to cause some

confusion of ideas. The notion of Wall and Moonshine announcing their respective characters to the audience is, no doubt, Shakespeare's humour; but every day that our great dramatist acted in the Globe he saw as sorry makeshifts for scenery as the lime-daubed tinker who acted Wall, and the dim tallow candle, in sore need of snuffing, that sputtered in the lantern of Moonshine.

At one o'clock—on Sundays especially, but also on other days—the playhouse flag was hoisted on the roof, announcing that the performance was going to begin; and there it fluttered till the play was over. Placards had already told the public what was to be the performance of the day. The audience consisted of two classes—the *groundlings*, or lower orders, who paid a trifle for admission to the pit; and the *gallants*, who paid sixpence apiece for stools upon the rush-strewn stage, where they sat in two rows smoking, and showing off their ruffs and doublets, while the actors played between them. The circle of the pit resounded with oaths and quarrelling, mingled with the clatter of ale-pots and the noise of card-playing. Nor did the occupants of the full-dress stools show better breeding than the unwashed groundlings. Noise, tobacco smoke, and the heavy fumes of ale formed the atmosphere in which our noblest plays were ushered into fame. When the trumpets had sounded, a figure in a long black velvet cloak came forward to recite the prologue. Then the play began; and if its early scenes did not suit the taste of the audience, a storm of noises arose: hisses, yells, cat-calls, cock-crowing, whistling, drowned the actors' voices and stopped the progress of the play. The actors—attired in the costume of their own day—played in masks and wigs; and the female parts—the *Violas*, the *Portias*, the *Rosalinds*—were filled by boys, or smooth-faced young men, in women's dress. All was over by three or four o'clock, and then the audience went home to an early supper.

The players—of whom Shakespeare was one—held no very exalted place in the society of the day. The very familiar way in which their Christian names have come down to us—as *Will* and *Ben*—shows that they were lightly esteemed by the courtiers and nobles—looked upon, if not exactly as menial servants in livery, yet as something not far above the jester who shook his cap and bells at the supper tables of the great. As Shakespeare wrote in the *Sonnets*—

“Alas! ’tis true, I have gone here and there,  
And made myself a motley to the view.”

They were formed into companies generally under the patronage of some nobleman, at whose parties they acted in presence of the guests. Neither their acting nor their play-writing—they nearly all held the dramatist’s pen—did so much for the more prosperous players as their shares in the Globe, or some other of the London theatres. The sum which managers paid before 1600 for a new play never exceeded £8 or £10; when, a little later, the number of theatres increased, the price rose to £20 or £25, and the receipts of the second day became the author’s perquisite. A few stray shillings might be also made by writing prologues to new pieces. It was the pennies of the groundlings, and the sixpences of the gallants, not the sale of his splendid dramas, that enabled Shakespeare to buy his house at Stratford, and retire a rich man to die in his native town. Many a university man, however, like Jonson and Chapman, earned his manchets and his sack, his steaks and ale, by acting and writing for the stage. The two occupations were nearly always united; and the wiser brethren of the buskin and the sock added, as Shakespeare did, a third and more fruitful source of income, by investing their early gains in theatre shares. Shakespeare acted at the Globe, wrote for the Globe, and pocketed some share of the money taken at the doors of the Globe. A sensible and prudent man was this glorious

dramatist, utterly unsympathizing with the ridiculous notion, hardly yet extinct, that a real poet must of necessity be a reckless, improvident fool.

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## CHAPTER II.

ROGER ASCHAM.

Born 1515 A.D. . . . . Died 1568 A.D.

ROGER ASCHAM, an eminent teacher as well as a great writer, has thus won double fame as a man of letters. He acted as classical tutor to Queen Elizabeth, whose fondness for him was very great; and he left behind him two works which rank high among our English classics.

At Kirby Wiske, near Northallerton, in Yorkshire, he was born in 1515, the son of an honest yeoman who acted as steward to the Scroopes. A certain Sir Anthony Wingfield, noticing the studious boy, took him among his own sons, gave him a good education, and in 1530 sent him to St. John's at Cambridge. To the study of Greek—which was just then taking root in our universities—the young student applied himself with such ardour that he was soon qualified to read Greek lectures to his younger associates. In 1534 he took his B.A., and his M.A. in 1536. And then he entered on the life of a teacher, for which he was remarkably well qualified. When Cheke resigned in 1546, he was chosen to fill the honourable office of University Orator.

One year later his first great book, *Toxophilus*, was published. This work won for him the kind wishes and cordial support of troops of friends, 1545 A.D. besides the notice of King Henry, who granted the writer a pension of £10 a year.

Ascham was shortly afterwards chosen to act as private tutor to the Princess Elizabeth. It was a fortunate choice for both the royal princess and the

Cambridge scholar. Fortunate for her, because her fine intellect was entrusted to the culture of one who knew his profession and loved it well; fortunate for him, because during two happy years (1548-50) he enjoyed the delight of teaching one who rejoiced to learn, and in after days he found, in his submissive and hard-working pupil, a royal mistress who loved and honoured her Greek master to the last.

The last three years of King Edward's reign (1550-53) Ascham spent in Germany, acting as secretary to Sir Richard Morysine, who was English ambassador at the Imperial Court. His experiences of German life are embodied in a work on that country and court. During these three years of absence his friends at home were endeavouring to do him good. His pension, which had ceased at the death of Henry the Eighth, was restored, and he received in addition the important office of Latin Secretary to the king.

Upon the accession of Queen Mary a cloud seemed to hang over the fortunes of the scholar, who was a keen Protestant. But the shadows passed. Bishop Gardiner was induced to look kindly on him, and on the strength of his book *Toxophilus* his pension was doubled, and his appointment as Latin Secretary was renewed. Nor was his college standing altered, for he still held his fellowship, and still wore the honours of Public Orator.

Under the sceptre of Elizabeth his life was a smooth and quiet stream. Her Majesty read Greek and Latin with her honoured tutor for some hours almost every morning, and in the evening they often played at tables or shovel-board together. At last the studies that he loved so well proved too much for the scholar's weakened frame. A feverishness, which prevented him from afternoon study and broke his night's rest, had long hung about him. Anxious to finish by New Year's Day 1569 a poem which he was writing in honour of his royal pupil, he began to work at night. Ague seized him, and in a week laid him on his death-



bed (December 30, 1568). So old Roger Ascham died, as many of his life's best hours had been spent, in the service of his pupil-queen. When she heard that the kind heart was still in death, she cried out, "I would rather have thrown ten thousand pounds into the sea than have lost my Ascham."

The titles of Ascham's three chief books are here given in full, as a specimen of the way in which the writers of this time named their works. We have:—

1. "Toxophilus, the Schole or Partitions of Shootinge, contayned in II. Bookes. Written by Roger Ascham, 1544, and now newly perused. Pleasaunt for all Gentlemen and Yeomen of Englande, for theyr pastime to reade, and profitable for theyr use to followe both in Warre and Peace." 2. "A Report and Discourse, written by Roger Ascham, of the Affaires and State of Germany, and of the Emperour Charles his Court, during certain years while the sayd Roger was there." 3. "The Schole-Master; or Plain and Perfite Way of teaching Children to Understand, Write, and Speake the Latin Tongue, but specially purposed for the private bringing up of Youth in Jentlemen and Noblemen's Houses."

The *Toxophilus* is, in many things, a sensible and pleasant book on archery, cast into the form of a dialogue between a lover of study (Philologus) and a lover of archery (Toxophilus). But, while it very properly insists on the use of out-door recreation to the studious man, it gives an undue prominence to the pastime whose name it bears, and needlessly undervalues some fine old English athletic sports. The language of the book—in the preface he half apologizes for not writing it in Latin—is good, honest English prose, pretending to no great elegance, but full of idiomatic strength.

Ascham's greatest work is *The Schoolmaster*, which was not published until after the author's death. It is remarkable as being the first important work on Education in our literature. The idea of the book

sprang from a discussion at Cecil's dinner-table at Windsor. Some of the Eton boys having run away from school to escape a flogging the conversation turned upon this bit of local news; and Ascham spoke out his mind. On the encouragement of Sackville, who sat by, he committed his thoughts to paper, and so the book began. The first section of the work condemns severity in the treatment of the young, while the second develops a new way of teaching Latin, without putting the pupils through the preparatory drudgery of mastering the details of the grammar.

Ascham's work on *Germany* gives, besides much political information, some curious pictures of the Emperor and his court, which are valuable as being sketched by an eye-witness.

#### EXTRACT FROM "THE SCHOOLMASTER" OF ASCHAM.

Before I went into Germany, I came to Broadgate in Leicestershire, to take my leave of that noble Lady Jane Grey, to whom I was exceeding much beholden. Her parents, the duke and duchess, with all the household, gentlemen and gentlewomen, were hunting in the park. I found her in her chamber reading Phœdon Platonis in Greek, and that with as much delight as some gentlemen would read a merry tale in Bocace. After salutation and duty done, with some other talk, I asked her why she would lose such pastime in the park. Smiling, she answered me: "I wiss, all their sport in the park is but a shadow to that pleasure that I find in Plato. Alas! good folk, they never felt what true pleasure meant." "And how came you, madam," quoth I, "to this deep knowledge of pleasure? And what did chiefly allure you into it, seeing not many women, but very few men, have attained thereunto?" "I will tell you," quoth she, "and tell you a truth which, perchance, ye will marvel at. One of the greatest benefits that ever God gave me is that he sent me so sharp and severe parents, and so gentle a schoolmaster. For when I am in presence either of father or mother, whether I speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go, eat, drink, be merry or sad, be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing anything else, I must do it, as it were in such weight, measure, and number, even so perfectly as God made the world, or else I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened, yea, presently, sometimes with pinches, nips, and bobs, and other ways which I will not name for the honour I bear them, so without measure misordered, that I think myself in hell, till time come that I must go to Mr. Elmer; who teacheth me so gently, so pleasantly, with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing, whiles I am with him."

## CHAPTER III.

GEORGE BUCHANAN.

Born 1506 A.D. . . . . Died 1582 A.D.

GEORGE BUCHANAN has been styled the Scottish Virgil from the elegance of his Latin verse, in which among moderns he stands unrivalled, at least by any writer of British birth. Nor is his Latin prose much inferior in vigour and in ease.

Born in Stirlingshire in 1506, he passed, after a poor and struggling boyhood, to the University of Paris, where he was supported by the kindness of his uncle, James Heriot. But in less than two years the death of this good friend flung him upon the world sick and poor. Returning to Scotland, he joined a Scottish army that was marching into England; but the hardships of a soldier's life once more laid him on a sick-bed. When restored to health, he went to college at St. Andrews, graduated there, and went again to France, where he completed his academic course at Paris. About the age of twenty-three he was chosen professor in the College of St. Barbe, and then began his teaching life.

Having acted for five years as tutor to the young Earl of Cassilis, who lodged near St. Barbe, Buchanan returned with his pupil to his native land. His growing reputation as a teacher won for him the notice of James the Fifth, who entrusted one of his own natural sons to his care. This office he continued to fill until his poetic satires upon the vices of the friars, especially the poem called *Franciscanus*, drew upon him the fiery wrath of the clergy. Charged with holding the Lutheran heresy—he really  
 1539 had caught the flame in Paris—he was  
 A.D. arrested; and but for his lucky escape through  
 a window while his keepers were asleep, the  
 name of Buchanan might now be read with those of

Hamilton and Wishart upon the sandstone obelisk at St. Andrews.

Before the year closed we find him teaching Latin in the College of Guienne, at Bordeaux, where Montaigne was his pupil. While there he made the acquaintance of the Scaligers, father and son, who lived at Agen. Here, too, he wrote four tragedies. After some changes of fortune in France, Buchanan went to fill a chair in the newly-established College of Coimbra, in Portugal, on the invitation of his friend Govea, who had been appointed Principal. Here he was assailed, after a short interval of peace, by the revengeful monks, who had never forgiven the poems in which he had heaped ridicule on their order. The fearful machinery of the Inquisition was now in full work, and Buchanan was in considerable danger of his life. But after the delay of a year and a half he was sentenced to confinement in a monastery, where he was to be schooled by the monks into better behaviour and sounder views. It is said, but without a shadow of evidence, that these monks gave him, as a punishment, the task of translating the Psalms into Latin verse. He certainly began in that quiet Portuguese cloister the version of the Psalms which has made his name so great ; and what more natural than that he should thus beguile the lagging hours of a captive's life ? We can fancy the keen pleasure with which his eye would brighten when the dull homilies of the monks were done for the day, and he found himself among his well-thumbed books in some sequestered nook, where, with the vine leaves tapping at the open grating, and a glimpse of the deep azure sky seen beyond their tender green, he loved to sit writing his great work. Upon his release, finding his chances of promotion in Portugal very doubtful, he sailed to England, whence after some time he passed to France. We find him soon in Italy, teaching the son of Marshal de Brissac, a great French soldier, by whom he was treated with re-

spectful kindness. The termination of this engagement, which lasted for five years, marks the close of Buchanan's Continental life.

The return of Buchanan to his native land, which was then convulsed with the throes of the Reformation, took place shortly before the year 1562. His fame as a teacher had crossed the Straits of Dover before him; and he was honoured, in spite of his Protestant principles, with the office of classical tutor to Queen Mary, who read a passage of Livy with him every day after dinner. In 1564 he received from his royal mistress and pupil, in recognition of his literary merit, the temporalities of Crossraguel Abbey, which were worth £500 a year in Scottish money. The Earl of Moray, who was then the leading man in Scotland, took special notice of this great scholar, and made him, in 1566, Principal of St. Leonard's College at St. Andrews. The murder of Darnley, and the marriage of Mary with Bothwell,

soon split Scotland into rival factions. Buchanan, siding with the Regent Moray, under-  
 1570 A.D. took the tuition of the young king, James the Sixth, into whom, according to the fashion of those days—and later days, too, not far from our own—he whipped so much Greek and Latin that the thick-speaking, shambling pedant acquired the name of the “British Solomon.” There is more than a spice of irony in the appellation; though, doubtless, many a servile courtier, with a fat living or an easy place in his eye, used it in another sense. Bitter and stern words flowed from Buchanan's pen against the royal girl, once his pupil, who had so sullied the crown she wore. The Latin work, *Detectio Mariæ Reginæ*, is a fierce exposure of her guilt and shame. Eight years later, in 1579, followed a masterly political work, *De Jure Regni*, maintaining the right of the people to control their rulers.

The last days of this great Scotsman were passed quietly, although his pupil James did not look so

kindly on him after the publication of his republican book in 1579. He wrote a yearly letter, transmitted by the wine-ships that traded from Leith to Bordeaux, to his old friend and colleague Vinetus. He penned a modest account of his own life ; and he completed his second great work, *The History of Scotland*, on which he had been engaged for twenty years.

In his seventy-seventh year he breathed his last, so poor that his body was buried at the expense of the city of Edinburgh. His *History of Scotland* was then passing through the press. It is written in Latin, of classic purity and grace. The record of events is brought down to the year 1572, and occupies twenty books, into which the whole work is divided. Buchanan adopts that practice of the ancient historians, by which they put fictitious speeches into the mouths of their leading characters. This, however well adapted for displaying the historian's skill in composition, takes from the truthfulness, which should be the pervading and governing quality of all history.

In his magnificent Latin version of the Psalms he has used twenty-nine different metres. The translation is freely executed, so that it frequently becomes a paraphrase rather than an exact rendering. The 104th and 137th Psalms are considered the gems of this masterpiece of elegant scholarship and poetic fire.

Among the miscellaneous works of Buchanan, it may suffice to name two—the *Epithalamium*, which he wrote in honour of Queen Mary's first marriage ; and a poem composed on the occasion of James the Sixth's birth. Both are in Latin, and both contain passages of excelling sweetness. A tract, called *The Chamæleon*, satirizing Secretary Maitland, affords a scanty specimen of the rugged vernacular in which this Scottish Virgil transacted his daily business.

A physician to Charles the First, born about 1587 in Aberdeenshire, by name Arthur Johnston, much of whose life was also spent abroad, wrote a complete



Latin version of the Psalms in elegiacs, which Hallam values almost as highly as the version of Buchanan.

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## CHAPTER IV.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

Born 1554 A.D. . . . . Died 1586 A.D.

WHILE Elizabeth in the first year of her reign was receiving the congratulations of a rejoicing land, a boy, not yet five years old, was plucking daisies and chasing butterflies on the green lawns of Penshurst, in Kent. It was Philip Sidney, son of Sir Henry Sidney and Mary Dudley, who was sister to the magnificent Leicester, soon to be prime favourite of the queen.

Philip, born in 1554, went to school at Shrewsbury, and passed thence to Christ Church, Oxford, where he won a scholar's fame. Having spent three years in Continental travel, during which he saw Paris drenched in the blood of Huguenots, and himself narrowly escaped death on the day of St. Bartholomew, he returned in his twenty-first year to England, a polished and accomplished man.

His *début* at court was an instant and decided success. No doubt his uncle, Leicester, then in the full blaze of royal favour, had much to do with this ; but Sidney had personal qualities which won for him the smiles of all. His finely-cut face, his faint moustache, his soft blue eyes and flowing amber hair, were enough to make him the darling of the women ; while his skill in horsemanship, fencing, and manly games gained the respect and admiration of the men. Higher than these outward and accidental graces must we rank the intellect and scholarship which stamped him as one of England's greatest sons ; and higher still, that gentle heart, whose pulses, always human, never

throbbed more kindly than when, on the field of his death, he turned the cooling draught from his own lips to slake the thirst of a dying soldier, past whom he was carried.

Yet this brilliance was not without its clouds. At tennis one day he quarrelled with the Earl of Oxtord, who ordered him to leave the playing-ground. This Sidney refused to do; upon which Oxford, losing temper, called him a puppy. Voices rose high, and a duel was impending, when Elizabeth interfered and took Sidney to task for not paying due respect to his superiors. His haughty spirit could not bear the rebuke, and he withdrew from court. Far from the glittering whirl, sheltered amid the oaks of Wilton, the seat of his brother-in-law, Pembroke, he wrote a romance, which he called *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*. Written merely to amuse his leisure hours, it was never finished, and was not given to the world till its writer had been four years dead. The censures which Horace Walpole and others have passed upon this work are quite unmerited. No book has been more knocked about by certain critics; but its popularity in the days of Shakespeare and the later times of the Cavaliers, with whom it was all the fashion, affords sufficient proof that it is a work of remarkable merit. We, who read Scott and Dickens and Thackeray, cannot, certainly, relish the *Arcadia* as Elizabeth's maids of honour relished it; but all who look into its pages must be struck with its rich fancy and its glowing pictures. It is not a pastoral, as the misnomer *Arcadia*, borrowed from Sannazzaro, seems to imply. There are indeed in this book shepherds, who dance and sing occasionally; but the life of a knight and courtier—such as Sidney's own—has clearly supplied the thoughts and scenery of the work.

But the book on which Sidney's reputation as an English classic writer rests is rather his *Defense of Poesie*, a short treatise, written in 1581, to combat certain opinions of the Elizabethan Puritans, who

would fain, in their well-meant but mistaken zeal, have swept away the brightest blossoms of our literature, along with pictures, statues, holidays, wedding-rings, and other pleasant things.

A favourite of Elizabeth, who called him the "jewel of her dominions," he was looked coldly on by the Cecils, whose policy it was to keep down men of rising talent. He had to struggle long against this aversion before he gained the governorship of Flushing. When this wish of his heart was at first refused, he was so angry that he resolved to join Sir Francis Drake's expedition, just then equipping for the West Indian seas. Nothing but a determined message from the queen, whose messages were not lightly to be disregarded, could turn him from this step. It is said that about the same time he became a candidate for the crown of Poland, but here again Elizabeth interfered.

The bright life had a sad and speedy close. Holland, then suffering in defence of her freedom and her faith, had sought the help of England, ceding in return certain towns, of which Flushing was one. Of this seaport Sidney became governor in 1585. In the following year his uncle, Leicester, laid siege to Zutphen (Southfen), a city on the Yssel, one of the mouths of the Rhine. A store of food, under the escort of some thousand troops, being dispatched by Parma, the Spanish general, for the relief of the place, Leicester resolved to intercept the supply; and rashly judging one English spear to be worth a dozen Spanish, he sent only a few hundred men on this perilous service. It was one of those glorious blunders of which our military history is full. Sidney was a volunteer, and as they rode on a chilly October morning to the fatal field, about a mile from Zutphen, the gallant knight, meeting an old general too lightly equipped for battle, gave him all his armour except the breastplate. Thus his kindness killed him; for in the last charge a musket-ball smashed his left thigh-bone to pieces, three inches above the knee. As he passed along to



*William Shakespeare*



the rear, the incident occurred which has been already noticed. Carried to Arnheim, he lay a few days, when mortification set in, and he died. 1586  
His last hours were spent in serious conversation upon the immortality of the soul, in sending kind wishes and keepsakes to his friends, and in the enjoyment of music. A.D.

Besides the *Arcadia* and the *Defense of Poesie*, Sidney wrote many beautiful sonnets, and in 1584 replied, with perhaps more vigour than prudence, to a work called *Leicester's Commonwealth*, impugning the character of his uncle.

### A STAG HUNT.

(FROM THE "ARCADIA.")

They came to the side of the wood, where the hounds were in couples, staying their coming, but with a whining accent craving liberty; many of them in colour and marks so resembling, that it shewed they were of one kind. The huntsmen handsomely attired in their green liveries, as though they were children of summer, with staves in their hands to beat the guiltless earth, when the hounds were at fault; and with horns about their necks, to sound an alarm upon a silly fugitive: the hounds were straight uncoupled, and ere long the stag thought it better to trust to the nimbleness of his feet than to the slender fortification of his lodging; but even his feet betrayed him; for, howsoever they went, they themselves uttered themselves to the scent of their enemies, who, one taking it of another, and sometimes believing the wind's advertisements, sometimes the view of—their faithful counsellors—the huntsmen, with open mouths, then denounced war, when the war was already begun. Their cry being composed of so well-sorted mouths that any man would perceive therein some kind of proportion, but the skilful woodmen did find a music. Then delight and variety of opinion drew the horsemen sundry ways, yet cheering their hounds with voice and horn, kept still as it were together. The wood seemed to conspire with them against his own citizens, dispersing their noise through all his quarters; and even the nymph Echo left to bewail the loss of Narcissus, and became a hunter. But the stag was in the end so hotly pursued, that, leaving his flight, he was driven to make courage of despair; and so turning his head, made the hounds, with change of speech, to testify that he was at a bay: as if from hot pursuit of their enemy, they were suddenly come to a parley.



## CHAPTER V.

EDMUND SPENSER.

Born 1552 A.D. . . . . Died 1599 A.D.

WHEN Chaucer died, the lamp of English poetry grew dim, shining for many years only with faint, uncertain gleams. A haze of blood rose from the trodden battle-fields of the Roses and the dust of old, decaying systems, the clamour of whose fall resounded through the shaking land, obscured the light, "and blotted out the stars of heaven." But only for a while. Truth came with the years. The red mist rolled away. Men breathed a purer air and drank a fresher life into their spirit, and a time came of which it may well be said, "There were giants on the earth in those days."

Edmund Spenser was, in point of time, the second of the four elder masters of our poetical literature. He was born in 1552, in East Smithfield, by the Tower of London. It is said that he was of a noble race, but we know little or nothing of his parents. Nor can we tell where he went to school. At the age of seventeen (1569) he entered Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, as a sizar, and there, in 1576, he took his degree of M.A. So meagre is our knowledge of his early life.

A friendship, formed at Cambridge with Gabriel Harvey of Trinity Hall, had considerable influence upon the poet's fortunes. When Spenser left college, having disagreed, it is thought, with the master of his hall, he went to live in the north of England, perhaps to act as tutor to some young friend. He had, no doubt, long been wooing the Muses by the Cam, but now the time had come when his genius was to shine out in fuller lustre. His fame, as often happens, had its root in a deep sorrow. A lady, whom he calls Rosalind, made a plaything of his heart, and, when tired of her sport, cast it from her.

She little knew the worth of the jewel she had flung away. "The sad mechanic exercise" of verse was balm to the wounded poet, who poured forth his soul in *The Shepherd's Calender*, begun in the north, but completed under the oak-trees of Penshurst, where dwelt "Maister Philip Sidney."

Spenser owed this brilliant friend to the kindness of Harvey, who had induced him to come to London. Thus he was naturally brought under the notice of Leicester, Sidney's uncle, by whose interest he became secretary to Lord Grey of Wilton, the 1580 newly-appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. A.D. The next two years were therefore spent in that country. Grey owed much to the gifted pen of his grateful secretary, who zealously defended his policy and reputation. The poet's services were rewarded in 1586 by a grant from Elizabeth of more than three thousand acres in the county of Cork. These acres—the estate of Kilcolman—formed a part of the forfeited lands of the rebel Desmonds, of which Raleigh had already received a large share. This seeming generosity—which, however, cost Elizabeth nothing—is ascribed to the good offices of Grey and Leicester; but there are not wanting hints that the cool and cautious Burleigh, anxious to thin the ranks of his magnificent rival, managed thus to consign to an honourable exile an adherent of Leicester, whose genius made him a formidable foe. The life of Spenser, all but the last sad scene, is henceforth chiefly associated with the Irish soil.

Smitten in the autumn of 1586 with a great grief—the death of Sidney near Zutphen—Spenser hurried across to his estate, of which he was 1586 called the *Undertaker*, and which he was A.D. compelled to cultivate, in terms of the grant.

It was a lovely scene, and we cannot quarrel with the causes, friendly or the reverse, which led the author of *The Faerie Queene* to take up his dwelling among "the green alders by the Mulla's

shore." The castle of Kilcolman, from which the Desmonds had been lately driven, stood by a beautiful lake in the midst of an extensive plain, girdled with mountain ranges. Woodland and hill and river-glade were all there to gladden the poet's heart with their changeful beauty, and tinge his verse with their glowing colours. Dearly he loved the wooded banks of the gentle Mulla, which ran by his home, and by whose wave, doubtless, many sweet lines of his great poem were composed. Hither there came to visit him the brilliant Raleigh, then a captain in the Queen's Guard, who seems to have quarrelled with Essex, and to have been "chased from court" by that hot-headed favourite. The result of this remarkable meeting was Spenser's resolve to publish the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*, with which Raleigh was greatly delighted.

The two friends—for Raleigh now filled in the poet's heart the place which Sidney had once held—crossed the sea together with the precious cantos. The voyage is poetically described in the Pastoral of *Colin Clouts come home againe*, written in 1591, and published in 1595, where Raleigh figures as the "Shepherd of the Ocean." Introduced by his friend to the queen, and

honoured with her approval, the poet lost no  
1590 time in giving to the world that part of *The*  
A.D. *Faerie Queene* which was ready for the press.

The success of the poem was so decided, that in the following year the publisher issued a collection of smaller pieces from the same pen. A pension of £50 from Elizabeth—no small sum three centuries ago—rewarded the genius and the flattery of Spenser, who then went back to Ireland to till his beautiful barren acres, and "pipe his oaten quill." He had, besides his farming and his poetry, a public work to do, and that of no easy or pleasant kind. As Clerk of the Council for Munster, and afterwards as Sheriff of Cork, he came much into collision with the Irish people, whom it was his policy to keep down with an iron hand.

The chief events of his later life were his marriage, and the publication of the second three books of *The Faerie Queene*. In the city of Cork, not far from his castle, he was united on the 11th of June 1594 to Elizabeth Boyle, in whose honour he sang the sweetest marriage song our language boasts. In 1596 he crossed to England and published the fourth, fifth, and sixth books of his great work.

So, laurelled and rejoicing, he returned to his Irish castle. To all appearance a long vista of happy years, bright with the love of wife and children, lay before the poet. But in that day life in Ireland resembled the perilous life of those who dress their vines and gather clusters on the sides of Etna or Vesuvius. Scarcely was he settled in his home when a torrent of rebellion swept the land. Hordes of long-coated peasants gathered round Kilcolman. Spenser and his wife had scarcely time to flee. In their Oct. haste and confusion their new-born child was 1598 left behind, and, when the rebels had sacked A.D. the castle, the infant perished in the flames. It was only three months later that Spenser breathed his last at an inn in King Street, Westminster. In Westminster Abbey, near the dust of Chaucer, the body of this great brother minstrel was laid.

The greatest work of Spenser is his *Faerie Queene*. Among his numerous other writings the *Shepherd's Calender*, *Colin Clout's Come Home Againe*, *Epithalamion*, and his *View of the State of Ireland* are worthy of special notice.

In a letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, prefixed to the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*, which were published in 1590, the poet himself tells us his object and his plan. His object was, following the example of Homer, Virgil, Ariosto, and Tasso, to write a book, coloured with a historical fiction, which should "fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline." The original plan provided for twelve books, "fashioning XII. morall vertues."

Of these twelve books we have only six. The old story of the six remaining books being finished in Ireland, and lost by a careless servant, or during the poet's voyage to England, is very improbable. Spenser had only time between 1596 and his death to write two cantos and a fragment of a third. Hallam justly says, "The short interval before the death of this great poet was filled up by calamities sufficient to wither the fertility of any mind." Prince Arthur, who is chosen as the hero of the poem, falls in love with the Faerie Queene, and, armed by Merlin, sets out to seek her in Faery Land. She is supposed to hold her annual feast for twelve days, during which twelve adventures are achieved by twelve knights, who represent, allegorically, certain virtues.

The Red-Crosse Knight, or Holiness, achieves the adventure of the first and finest book. In spite of the plots of the wizard Archimago (Hypocrisy) and the wiles of the witch Duessa (Falsehood), he slays the dragon that ravaged the kingdom of Una's father, and thus wins the hand of that fair princess (Truth). Sir Guyon, or Temperance, is the hero of the second adventure; Britomartis, or Chastity—a Lady-Knight—of the third; Cambel and Triamond, typifying Friendship, of the fourth; Artegall, or Justice, of the fifth; Sir Calidore, or Courtesy, of the sixth. The six books form a descending scale of merit. The first two have the fresh bloom of genius upon them; the third contains some exquisite pictures of womanhood, coloured with the light of poetic fancy; but in the last three the divine fire is seen only in fitful and uncertain flashes. It was not that the poet had written himself out, but he had been tempted to aim at achieving too much. Not content with giving us the most exquisite pictures of chivalrous life that have ever been limned in English words, and at the same time enforcing with some success lessons of true morality and virtue, he attempted to interweave with his bright allegories the history of his own day. Thus

Gloriana the Faerie Queene, and Belphebe the huntress, represent Elizabeth; Artégall is Lord Grey; Duessa is intended for poor Mary Stuart. Spenser's flattery of Queen Bess, whose red wig becomes in his melodious verse "yellow locks, crisped like golden wire," is outrageous. It was a fashion of the day, to be sure; and, after all, poets are only human. It is almost needless to say that the politics dull and warp the beauty of the poetry—a fact nowhere more manifest than in the fifth book, whose real hero is Lord Grey of Wilton.

The language of Spenser was purposely cast in an antique mould, of which one example is the frequent use of *y* before the past participle. The expletives *do* and *did* occur in his pages to an extreme degree. The stanza in which this great poem is written, and which bears the poet's name, is the Italian *ottava rima*, with a ninth line—an Alexandrine—added to close the cadence. It may well be compared to the swelling wave of a summer sea, which sweeps on—a green transparent wall—until it breaks upon the pebbly shore in long and measured flow. Thomson, Campbell, and Byron have proved the power of the Spenserian stanza.

In his Pastorals—the *Shepherd's Calender* and *Colin Clout*—Spenser cast aside much of the stereotyped classic form. Instead of Tityrus and Corydon breathing their joys and sorrows in highly polished strains, we find Hobbinoll and Diggon, Cuddie and Piers, chatting away in good old-fashioned English about the Church and its pastors, poets and their woes, and similar themes. The *Calender* contains twelve eclogues—one for every month in the year.

That Spenser could write capital prose, as well as exquisite verse, is clearly proved by his *View of the State of Ireland*, a dialogue in which that land and the habits of its natives are finely described. The views of Spenser as to the government of the Irish people seem to have harmonized with those of Strafford,



whose watchword was "Thorough." This prose work of Spenser, though presented to Elizabeth in 1596, was not printed until 1633.

THE OPENING STANZAS OF THE FIRST CANTO OF  
"THE FAERIE QUEENE."

A gentle Knight was pricking on the plaine,  
Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde,  
Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine,  
The cruel markes of many a bloody fielde ;  
Yet armes till that time did he never wield :  
His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,  
As much disdayning to the curbe to yield :  
Full iolly knight he seemed, and faire did sitt,  
As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt.

And on his brest a bloodie crosse he bore,  
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,  
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,  
And dead, as living ever, him ador'd :  
Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,  
For soveraine hope, which in his helpe he had.  
Right, faithfull, true he was in deede and word ;  
But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad ;  
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

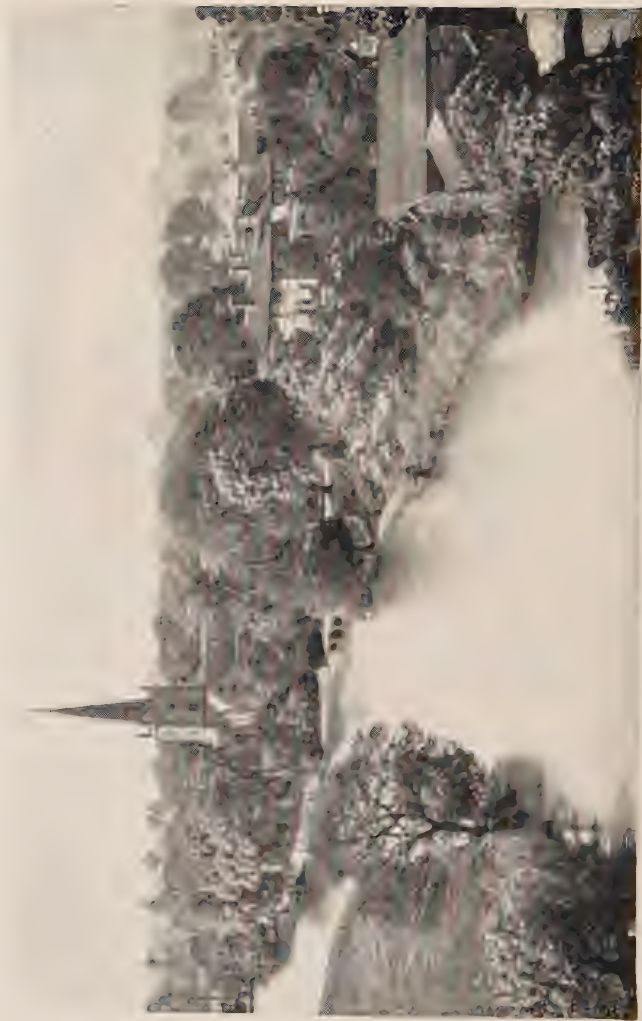
Upon a great adventure he was bond,  
That greatest Gloriana to him gave,  
(That greatest glorious queene of Faery lond),  
To winne him worshippe, and her grace to have,  
Which of all earthly thinges he most did crave :  
And ever, as he rode, his hart did earne  
To prove his puissance in battell brave  
Upon his foe, and his new force to learne ;  
Upon his foe, a Dragon horrible and stearne.

A lovely Ladie rode him faire beside,  
Upon a lowly asse more white than snow ;  
Yet she much whiter ; but the same did hide  
Under a vele, that wimpled was full low ;  
And over all a blacke stole shee did throw :  
As one that inly mournd, so was she sad,  
And heavie sate upon her palfrey slow ;  
Seemed in heart some hidden care she had ;  
And by her in a line a milke-white lambe she lad.

So pure and innocent, as that same lambe,  
She was in life and every vertuous lore ;  
And by descent from royall lynage came  
Of ancient kinges and queenes, that had of yore  
Their scepters stretcht from east to westerne shore,



STATIONER AVON.  
(Photo by Frith.)



And all the world in their subjection held ;  
 Till that infernal Feend with foule uprore  
 Forwasted all their land, and them expeld ;  
 Whom to avenge, she had this Knight from far compeld.

Behind her farre away a Dwarfe did lag,  
 That lasie seemd, in being ever last,  
 Or wearied with bearing of her bag  
 Of needments at his backe. Thus as they past,  
 The day with cloudes was suddaine overcast,  
 And angry love an hideous storme of raine  
 Did poure into his lemans lap so fast,  
 That everie wight to shrowd it did constrain ;  
 And this faire couple eke to shroud themselves were fain.

Enforst to seeke some covert nigh at hand,  
 A shadie grove not farr away they spide,  
 That promist ayde the tempest to withstand ;  
 Whose loftie trees, yclad with sommer's pride,  
 Did spred so broad, that heavens light did hide,  
 Not perceable with power of any starr :  
 And all within were pathes and alleies wide,  
 With footing worne, and leading inward farr :  
 Faire harbour that them seems ; so in they entred ar.

And fourth they passe, with pleasure forward led,  
 Ioying to heare the birdes sweete harmony,  
 Which, the rein shrouded from the tempest dred,  
 Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky.  
 Much can they praise the trees so straight and hy,  
 The sayling pine ; the cedar proud and tall ;  
 The vine-propp elme ; the poplar never dry ;  
 The builder oake, sole king of forrests all ;  
 The aspine good for staves ; the cypresse funerall ;

The laurell, meed of mightie conquerours  
 And poets sage ; the firre that weepeth still ;  
 The willow, worne of forlorne paramours ;  
 The eugh, obedient to the benders will ;  
 The birch for shaftes ; the sallow for the mill ;  
 The mirrhe sweete-bleeding in the bitter wound ;  
 The warlike beech ; the ash for nothing ill ;  
 The fruitfull olive ; and the platane round ;  
 The carver holme ; the maple seeldom inward sound.

Led with delight, they thus beguile the way,  
 Untill the blustring storme is overblowne ;  
 When, weening to returne whence they did stray,  
 They cannot finde that path, which first was showne,  
 But wander too and fro in waies unknowne,  
 Furthest from end then, when they neerest weene,  
 That makes them doubt their wits be not their owne :  
 So many pathes, so many turnings seene,  
 That, which of them to take, in diverse doubt they been.

At last resolving forward still to fare,  
 Till that some end they finde, or in or out,  
 That path they take, that beaten seemd most bare,  
 And like to lead the labyrinth about ;  
 Which when by tract they hunted had throughout,  
 At length it brought them to a hollow cave,  
 Amid the thickest woods. The Champion stout  
 Eftsoones dismounted from his courser brave,  
 And to the Dwarfe a while his needlesse spere he gave.

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## CHAPTER VI.

RICHARD HOOKER.

Born 1554 A.D. . . . . Died 1600 A.D.

WHEN Richard Hooker gave to the world his work on the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, English prose literature acquired a dignity it had not known before. The last decade of Elizabeth was indeed a glorious time in the annals of British authorship. The genius of Shakespeare was then bursting into full bloom ; Spenser was penning the *Faerie Queene* on the banks of Mulla ; Bacon, a rising young barrister, was sketching out the ground-plan of the great *Novum Organum* ; and in the quietude of a country parsonage a meek and henpecked clergyman was composing a work which, for force of reasoning and gracefulness of style, is justly regarded as one of the master-pieces of our literature. Richard Hooker was writing his great treatise.

Born at Heavitree, near Exeter, in March 1554, Hooker was indebted to the kindness of Bishop Jewel for a university education. The modest young student, who was enrolled on the books of Corpus Christi at Oxford, did not disappoint the hopes of his patron : his college career was marked with steady application and closed with honour. His eminence as a student of Oriental tongues led to his appointment in 1579 as lecturer on Hebrew. Two years later he entered the Church.

And then a great misfortune befell Master Richard Hooker. Appointed to preach at St. Paul's Cross, he left his college, a perfect simpleton in the world's ways, and journeyed up to London. There he had lodgings in the house of one John Churchman, whose wife so won by her officious attentions upon the drenched and jaded traveller, that he thought he could not do better than follow her advice and marry her daughter Joan, whom she strongly recommended as a suitable wife and skilful nurse for a man so delicate as he appeared to be. Accordingly in the following year Richard and Joan were married; and not till it was too late did the poor fellow find that he had bound himself for life to a shrew.

The first year or so of his married life was spent in Bucks, where he was rector of Drayton-Beauchamp. But the affection of an old pupil, Sandys, son of the Archbishop of York, obtained for him in 1585 the post of Master of the Temple. It was his duty here to preach in the forenoon, while the afternoon lecture was delivered by Travers, a zealous Calvinist. The views of the two preachers were so diametrically opposed to each other, that it was said "the pulpit spake pure Canterbury in the morning and Geneva in the afternoon" (Thomas Fuller). Travers was forbidden to preach by Archbishop Whitgift; and a paper war began between the rivals, which so vexed the gentle Hooker that he begged to be restored to a quiet parsonage, where he might labour in peace upon the great work he had begun.

In 1591 his wish was granted. He received the living of Boscombe, in Wiltshire; and, gathering his beloved books and papers round him, he sat down to his desk, no doubt with a deep sense of relief.

There he wrote the first four books of the 1594 *Ecclesiastical Polity*, which were published in A.D. 1594. In recognition, probably, of this great service to the Church of England, the queen made him in the following year rector of Bishopsbourne, in



Kent. The important duties of his sacred office and the completion of his eight books filled up the few remaining years of his life. Never very strong, and weakened, perhaps, by ardent study, he caught a heavy cold, which, settling on his lungs, proved fatal on November 2, 1600. The fifth book of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* was printed in 1597, the sixth and eighth in 1648, and the seventh in 1662.

"The first book of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*," says Hallam, "is at this day one of the master-pieces of English eloquence." The moderate tone of the work, which was written against the Puritans, is worthy of all praise. The author is sometimes censured for the great length of his sentences; but the best critics agree in admiring the beauty and dignity of his style, which, woven of stout English words, is yet embroidered with some of the fairest and loftiest figures of poetry. This charm—the ornament of figures—English prose had probably never possessed till Hooker wrote.

#### ON CHURCH MUSIC.

(FROM THE "ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY.")

Touching musical harmony, whether by instrument or by voice, it being but of high and low in sounds a due proportionable disposition, such notwithstanding is the force thereof, and so pleasing effects it hath in that very part of man which is most divine, that some have been thereby induced to think that the soul itself by nature is, or hath in it, harmony; a thing which delighteth all ages, and besemeth all states; a thing as seasonable in grief as in joy; as decent being added unto actions of greatest weight and solemnity, as being used when men most sequester themselves from action. The reason hereof is an admirable facility which music hath to express and represent to the mind, more inwardly than any other sensible mean, the very standing, rising and falling, the very steps and inflections every way, the turns and varieties of all passions whereunto the mind is subject; yea, so to imitate them, that, whether it resemble unto us the same state wherein our minds already are, or a clean contrary, we are not more contentedly by the one confirmed, than changed and led away by the other. In harmony, the very image and character even of virtue and vice is perceived, the mind delighted with their resemblances, and brought by having them often iterated into a love of the things themselves. For which cause there is nothing more contagious and pestilent than some kinds of harmony; than some, nothing more strong and potent unto good.

## CHAPTER VII.

THOMAS SACKVILLE, EARL OF DORSET.

Born 1536 A.D. .... Died 1608 A.D.

SACKVILLE was the herald of that splendour in which Elizabeth's reign was destined to close. He was born in 1536, at Buckhurst in Sussex, the seat of his ancestors. His father, Richard Sackville, had held high office in the Exchequer. Some home teaching, a few terms at Oxford, and a continuation of his course at Cambridge, where he graduated as M.A., prepared the way for his entrance upon the profession of the law and a statesman's life. While at college, his skill in verse-making gained him some little fame; and when entered at the Inner Temple, and regularly set down to the study of dry and dusty law books, he did not forget those flowery paths in which he had spent so many glad hours, but often stole from his graver studies to weave his stanzas.

With his political career we have here little to do, and a few notes of it must therefore suffice. Created Lord Buckhurst in 1567 and Earl of Dorset in 1604, he laid aside his literary pursuits and gave himself up to the toils of statesmanship. Twice he crossed the seas as ambassador. He was selected, on account of his gentle manner and address, to tell her doom to the wretched woman who once was Queen of Scotland. And, in a later year, he sat as Lord Steward, presiding over those brother peers who were appointed to try the unhappy Essex. The dislike of Leicester clouded his fortunes, and cast him into prison; but when in 1588 death freed him from this foe, he regained the royal favour. He reached the pinnacle of his greatness in 1599, upon the death of Lord Burleigh, when he became Lord High Treasurer of England. This great office he continued to hold until he died in 1608, at

a good old age. Elizabeth and James, unlike in almost everything else, agreed in appreciating his services.

While still a student in the Temple, he had joined Thomas Norton in writing a play then called *Gorboduc*, which was acted before Elizabeth at Whitehall by a company of his fellow-students of the Inner Temple, as a part of the Christmas revels of 1561. This was the first English tragedy, so far as is known. It resembles the later tragedies in having five acts, of which probably Norton wrote three, and Sackville the last two ; but it differs from them in the use of that excrescence of the classic plays, called the Chorus. Every act of *Gorboduc*, or *Ferrex and Porrex*, as the authors called it in the revised edition of 1571, is closed with an ode in long-lined stanzas, filled, as was the old Greek chorus, with moral reflections on the various scenes. The plot of this play was founded on a bloody story of ancient British history.

But a greater work than *Gorboduc* adorns the memory of Sackville. During the last years of Mary, he sketched out the design of a great poem, which was to be entitled *The Mirrour of Magistrates*, and was to embrace poetic histories of all the great Englishmen who had suffered remarkable disasters. The

1559 bulk of this work, which first appeared in  
A.D. 1559, was done by minor writers of the time ;

but the *Induction* and the *Story of the Duke of Buckingham*, contributed to the second edition in 1563, are from the pen of Sackville. The *Induction* is a grand pictured allegory, which describes " within the porch and jaws of hell " Remorse, Dread, Revenge, and other terrible things, that are ever gnawing away at the root of our human life. It contains only a few hundred lines, and yet these are enough to place Sackville high on the list of British poets. As already hinted, these poems were the fruit of Sackville's early summer ; the ripeness of his life was devoted to cares of the state.

## OLD AGE.

(FROM "THE INDUCTION.")

And, next in order, sad Old Age we found,  
His beard all hoar, his eyes hollow and blind,  
With drooping cheer still poring on the ground,  
As on the place where nature him assigned  
To rest, when that the Sisters had untwined  
His vital thread, and ended with their knife  
The fleeting course of fast-declining life.

There heard we him, with broke and hollow plaint,  
Rue with himself his end approaching fast,  
And all for nought his wretched mind torment  
With sweet remembrance of his pleasures past,  
And fresh delights of lusty youth forewaste ;  
Recounting which, how would he sob and shriek,  
And to be young again of Jove beseek !

But, an the cruel fates so fixed be  
That time forepast cannot return again,  
This one request of Jove yet prayed he—  
That, in such withered plight and wretched pain  
As Eld, accompanied with her loathsome train,  
Had brought on him, all were it woe and grief,  
He might awhile yet linger forth his life,

And not so soon descend into the pit,  
Where Death, when he the mortal corpse hath slain,  
With reckless hand in grave doth cover it,  
Thereafter never to enjoy again  
The gladsome light, but, in the ground ylain,  
In depth of darkness waste and wear to nought,  
As he had ne'er into the world been brought.

But who had seen him sobbing how he stood  
Unto himself, and how he would bemoan  
His youth forepast,—as though it wrought him good  
To talk of youth, all were his youth foregone—  
He would have mused, and marvelled much, whereon  
This wretched Age should life desire so fain,  
And knows full well life doth but length his pain.

Crook-backed he was, tooth-shaken, and blear-eyed,  
Went on three feet, and sometime crept on four ;  
With old lame bones, that rattled by his side ;  
His scalp all piled, and he with eld forelore ;  
His withered fist still knocking at Death's door ;  
Fumbling and drivelling as he draws his breath ;  
For brief, the shape and messenger of Death.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

## OUR ENGLISH BIBLE.

WE have already seen how the first English Bible grew, sentence by sentence, in the quiet study of Lutterworth Rectory, where John Wycliffe sat among his books; how William Tyndale dared death and found it in a foreign land, that he might spread God's word freely among his awakening nation; how Miles Coverdale published in 1535 a version of the *whole* Bible, translated from the Hebrew and the Greek; and how, in 1540, Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, superintended the issue of a new translation, which was called Cranmer's, or the Great Bible.

One Sunday in February 1526, the great Wolsey sat in old St. Paul's under a canopy of cloth of gold. His robe was purple; scarlet gloves blazed on his hands; and golden shoes glittered on his feet. A magnificent array of satin and damask-gowned priests encircled his throne; and the gray head of old Bishop Fisher—soon to roll bloody on a scaffold—appeared in the pulpit of the place. Below that pulpit stood rows of baskets, piled high with books, the plunder of London and the university towns. These were Tyndale's Testaments, ferreted out by the emissaries of the cardinal, who had swept every cranny in search of the hated thing. None there fresh from the printer's hand—all well-thumbed volumes, scored with many a mark, and parted from with many bitter  
 1526 tears! Outside the gate before the great cross  
 A.D. there burned a fire, hungering and leaping for its prey. On that day no blood slaked its thirst—this was to be but a prelude to the grand performance of later days. Bibles only were to burn; not Bible readers. When the sermon was over, men who loved to read these books were forced, with a refinement of cruelty, to throw the precious volumes

into the flames, while the cardinal and his prelates stood looking at the pleasant show, until the last sparks died out in the great heaps of ashes ; and then the gorgeous crowd went home to supper, rejoicing in their work of destruction.

Scenes like this occurred more than once at St. Paul's Cross ; yet the Bible lived—was revised and translated with more untiring industry than ever.

Fifteen years after the burning thus described, and five years after the body of Tyndale had perished like his books in the flames, a royal order was issued, commanding a copy of the Bible to be placed in every church, where the people might read or hear it freely. Gladly was the boon welcomed ; young and old flocked in crowds to drink of the now unsealed fountain of life. Then was often beheld, within 1541 the gray crypt of St. Paul's, a scene which a A.D. distinguished Scottish artist \* made the subject of a noble picture. The Great Bible, chained to one of the solid pillars which upheld the arches of the massive roof, lay open upon a desk. Before it stood a reader, chosen for his clear voice ; and as leaf after leaf was turned, the breathless hush of the listening crowd grew deeper. Gray-headed old men and women, mothers with their children beside them and maidens in the young dawn of womanhood, merchants from their stalls and courtiers from the palace, beggary and disease crawling from the fetid alleys, stood still to hear ; while in the dim background, men who, if they had dared, would have torn the sacred Book to tatters and trampled it in the dust, looked sourly on.

This privilege of hearing the Bible at church, or reading it at home, so much prized by the English people then, was snatched from them again by their fickle king. But in 1547 the tyrant died, and during the reign of the gentle boy Edward Bible-reading was restored. Under Elizabeth the Bible was finally established as the great standard of our national faith.

\* Sir George Harvey, President of the Royal Scottish Academy.



Two editions, appearing before our own translation, may be noted—the Geneva Bible, so dear to the Puritans, finished in 1560 by Miles Coverdale and other exiles who were driven from England by the flames of persecution; and the Bishop's Bible of 1568, a translation superintended by Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was aided by the first scholars of that learned age.

Then came the translation which we still use. How tame and cold the words of that Book, entwined as they are with the memory of earliest childhood, would fall upon our ear if rendered into the English in which we speak our common words and read our common books!

Within an oak-panelled and tapestried room of that splendid palace which Wolsey built at Hampton by the Thames, King James the First, most pedantic of our English monarchs, sat enthroned among an assembly of divines, who were met in conference upon the religious affairs of the kingdom. It was then little more than nine months after his accession to the English throne, and he took his seat, resolved

to teach the Puritan doctors that in him they  
Jan. 14, had to deal with a prince of logicians and a  
1604 master in theology. There were present, to

A.D. back the wisdom of the British Solomon and  
applaud his eloquence, some twenty bishops and high clergy of the Church of England, the lords of the Privy Council, and many courtiers; while to speak in the cause of needed change there were only four—two doctors from Oxford, and two from Cambridge. It would be out of place here to describe how, during the three days of conference, amid the titters of the courtiers and the gratified smiles of the clergy, the conceited king called the Puritan doctors “dunces fit to be whipped,” and indulged in other similar flights of his peculiar, knock-down style of oratory. The scene, ridiculous in most respects, is memorable to us, because it led to the publication of

our English Bible. During one of the pauses of the fusillade, when the royal orator was out of breath, Dr. Reynolds proposed a new version of the Scriptures; and James saw fit, by-and-by, to yield his gracious consent.

Fifty-four scholars were appointed to the great work, but only forty-seven of these actually engaged in the translation. Taking the Bishop's Bible as the basis of the new version, they set to their task in divisions, Oxford, Cambridge, and Westminster being the centres of their labour; and often meeting to compare notes and correct one another's manuscripts, they completed their translation in about three years. Our Bible was therefore published, with a dedication to King James, in the year 1611. 1611

A revised version of the New Testament A.D. was published in 1881, and a corresponding version of the Old Testament in 1885. In the opinion of many persons a completely new translation would so utterly destroy those solemn associations which, rooted in every heart, are twined, closer than the ivy around its elm tree, round the antique English of our Bibles, that to attempt it would be dangerous and wrong. During the ascendancy of the Puritans in Cromwell's day, the same scheme was mooted, for the Puritans long preferred the Geneva Bible to that of King James; but on the proposal being laid before the leading scholars of that time, they pronounced the translation of 1611 "best of any in the world;" and so the matter dropped.

Hallam reminds us that even in the days of King James the language of this translation was older than the prevailing speech. "It may," this great critic says, "in the eyes of many be a better English, but it is not the English of Daniel, or Raleigh, or Bacon, as any one may easily perceive. It abounds, in fact, especially in the Old Testament, with obsolete phraseology, and with single words long since abandoned, or retained only in provincial use."

This may all be true; yet in the face of Hallam's

implied disparagement we hold, with scores of better judges, that the English of the Bible is unequalled in the full range of our literature. Whether we take the subtile argument of Paul's Epistles, the sublime poetry of Job and the Psalms, the imagery of the Parables, the simple narrative of the Gospels, the eloquence of Isaiah, or the plain histories of Moses and Samuel, but one impression deepens as we read, and remains as we close the volume—that, without regard to its infinite greatness as the written word of God, taken simply as a literary work, there is no English book like our English Bible.

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## CHAPTER IX.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Born 1564 A.D. . . . . Died 1616 A.D.

CLOSE by the river Avon, in Warwickshire, a tall gray spire, springing from amid elms and lime trees, marks the position of the parish church of Stratford, in the chancel of which sleeps the body of our greatest poet. The proud roof of Westminster has been deemed by England the fitting vault for her illustrious dead; but Shakespeare's dust rests in a humbler tomb. By his own loved river, whose gentle music fell sweet upon his childish ear, he dropped into his last sleep; and still its murmur, as it sweeps between its willowy banks, seems to sing the poet's dirge. Four lines, carved upon the flat stone which lies over his grave, are ascribed to his own pen. Whoever wrote them, they have served their purpose well, for a religious horror of disturbing the honoured dust has ever since hung about the place.

“Good friend, for Jesus' sake, forbear,  
To dig the dust enclosed here.  
Blest be y<sup>e</sup> man y<sup>t</sup> spares these stones,  
And curst be he y<sup>t</sup> moves my bones.”

A niche in the wall above holds a bust of the poet, whose high, arching brow, and oval face, fringed with a peaked beard and small moustache, are so familiar to us all. How well we know his face and his spirit; and yet how little of the man's real life has descended to our day!

Not very far from Shakespeare's tomb part of the house in which he was born still stands. Sun and rain and air have gradually reduced the plastered timber of its old neighbours into powder; but its wood and lime still hold together, and the room is still shown in which the child Shakespeare's voice uttered its first feeble wail. The dingy walls of the little chamber are scribbled all over with the names of visitors, such as Scott and Byron. It is pleasant to think that this shrine, sacred to the memory of the greatest English writer, has been purchased by the English nation; so that lovers of Shakespeare have now the satisfaction of feeling that the relics, which tell so picturesque a story of the poet's earliest days, are in pious keeping.

Here, then, was born in April 1564, William, son of John Shakespeare and Mary Arden, his wife.

The gossiping Aubrey, no great authority, 1564 certainly, who came into the world about ten A.D. years after Shakespeare's death, says that the poet's father was a butcher; others make out the honest man to have been a wool-comber or a glover; while an ingenious writer strives to reconcile all accounts by supposing that since good John held some land in the neighbourhood of Stratford, whenever he killed a sheep, he sold the mutton, the wool, and the skin, adding to his other occupations the occasional dressing of leather and fashioning of gloves. Perhaps John Shakespeare's chief occupation was dealing in wool. At any rate, whatever may have been his calling, he ranked high enough among the burgesses of Stratford to sit on the bench as High Bailiff or Mayor of the town. Mary Arden, who

should perhaps interest us more, if the commonly received rule be true that men more strongly resemble their mothers in nature and genius, seems to have belonged to an old county family, and to have possessed what was then a considerable fortune.

The beautiful woodland scenery amid which the boy grew to early manhood made a deep impression on his soul. The beds of violets and banks of wild thyme, whose fragrance seems to mingle with the music of the lines that paint their beauty, blossomed richly by the Avon. The leafy glades, from which were pictured those through whose cool green light the melancholy Jacques wandered, and under whose arching boughs Bully Bottom and his friends rehearsed their "very tragical mirth," were not in the dales of Middlesex or Surrey, but in the Warwickshire Valley of the Red Horse. But of all men or boys, Shakespeare was no mere dreamer, fit only

"To pore upon the brook that babbles by."

We have no doubt that when the daily tasks were done in the public grammar school of Stratford, where Will probably got all the regular instruction he ever had, the said Will might often have been spied on Avon banks, rod in hand, thinking more of trout and dace than of violets or wild thyme. And, as we shall shortly see, there is a strong suspicion, not far removed from certainty, that more than once he saw the moon rise over the dark oak woods of Charlecote Park, while he lurked in the shadow, waiting for the deer, with more of the poacher than the poet in his guise.

And while he was receiving from Hunt and Jenkins, then the masters of the school, that education which his friend Jonson characterizes as consisting of "little Latin and less Greek," an occasional visit to scenes of a different kind, not far away, may have mingled the colouring of town life and courtly pageants with those pictures of woodland sweetness which his mind

caught from the home landscape. Warwick and Coventry—Godiva's town—were near; and in the castle of Kenilworth in the year 1575, when the princely Leicester feasted the queen for nineteen days, why may we not suppose that Alderman or Ex-Bailiff Shakespeare, his wife Dame Mary, and his little son Will, then aged eleven, were among the crowd of people who had travelled from all the country round to see the queen, the masquers, and the fire-works? Strolling players, too, sometimes knocked up their crazy stage, hung with faded curtains, in the market-place of Stratford, and there flourished their wooden swords, and raved through their parts to the immense delight of the gaping rustics. Such visits, dear to all the boys of a country town, were, no doubt, longed for and intensely enjoyed by young Shakespeare.

How he spent his life after he had left school, and before he went to London, we know as dimly as we know the calling of his father. Aubrey says he helped his father the butcher, and that he acted also as a teacher. It is thought, from the constant recurrence of law terms in his writings, that he spent some of these years in an attorney's office. All stories may be true, for everything we know of the poet during this period goes to show that he was by no means a steady or settled character. He may have killed an odd calf or sheep, have taught an occasional class for his former master, and have driven the quill over many yards of yellow parchment. The very existence of *three* different stories about his early occupation implies that his life at Stratford was changeful and undecided. Nor was he free from youthful faults. To tell the truth, he appears to have engaged in many wild pranks, of which two stories have floated down to our day. One relates to an ale-drinking bout at the neighbouring village of Bidford, by which he was so overcome that, with his companions, he was obliged to spend the night by the roadside under



the sheltering boughs of a large crab-tree. The other story is that of the poaching affair already alluded to. It seems that the wild youths of Stratford could not resist the temptation of hunting deer and rabbits in the park of Sir Thomas Lucy, who lived at Charlecote, nearly five miles off. Shakespeare got into the poaching set, was detected one night, and locked up in the keeper's lodge till morning. His examination before the offended justice, and whatever punishment followed it, awoke the anger of the boyish poet, who in revenge wrote some doggerel, punning rhymes upon Sir Thomas, and stuck them on the park gate. This was throwing oil upon flame; and the knight's rage grew so violent that Shakespeare had to flee from Stratford. We have thought it right to notice these traditions, though many modern authorities discard them with scorn. With much fictitious colouring, they have perhaps a groundwork of truth sufficient to afford a strong presumption that Shake-

speare's opening manhood was wild and  
1582 riotous. His early marriage, too, contracted  
A.D. when he was but a raw boy of eighteen, with

Anne Hathaway of Shottery, a yeoman's daughter, some eight years older than himself, affords additional evidence of youthful indiscretion.

So, driven either by the fear of Sir Thomas Lucy's vengeance, or, more probably, by the need of providing daily bread for his wife and children, Shakespeare went up to London early in 1586; and then began that wonderful theatrical life of three-and-twenty years, whose great creations form the chief glory of our dramatic literature. The brightest day at noon is that whose dawn is wrapped in heavy mists; and so upon the opening of this brilliant time—the midsummer of English poetry—thick clouds of darkness rest.

How Shakespeare lived when first he arrived in London, we do not certainly know. Three Warwickshire men, one a native of his own town, then held a

prominent place among the metropolitan players, and this no doubt, coupled with his poetical tastes, led him to the theatre. Here, too, there are vague traditions of his life. According to one, he was call-boy or deputy-prompter; according to another, he held horses at the theatre door. However he may have earned his first shillings in London, it is certain that he soon became prosperous, and even wealthy.

In the year 1589 he held a share in the Blackfriars Theatre, having previously, by his A.D. acting, by the adaptation of old plays, and the production of new ones, proved himself worthy to be much more than a mere sleeping partner in the concern. As his fame brightened, his purse filled. He became also a part-owner of the Globe Theatre; and at one time drew from all sources a yearly income fully equivalent to £1,500 of our money.

"Respectable" is perhaps the best word by which Shakespeare's *acting* may be characterized: the Ghost in *Hamlet*, and Adam in *As You Like It*, are named among his favourite parts. But his magic pen has taught us almost to forget that he ever was an actor; nor can we, without a violent stretch of fancy, realize our greatest poet stalking slowly with whitened cheeks across the boards, or tottering in old-fashioned livery through a rudely painted forest of Arden. Thus acting, writing, and managing, he lived among the fine London folks, honoured with the special notice of his queen, and associating every day with the noblest and wittiest Englishmen of that brilliant time, yet never snapping the link which bound him to the banks of Avon. Every year he ran down to Stratford, where his family continued to reside; and there he bought a house and land for the rest and solace of his last years.

The year 1614 is given as the date of the poet's final retirement from London life. He was then only fifty, and might reasonably hope for a full score of years in which to grow his flowers, his mulberries,

and his apple trees, to treat his friends to sack and claret under the hospitable roof of New Place, and to continue that series of Roman plays which had so noble a beginning in *Julius Cæsar* and *Coriolanus*. But two years more brought this great

1616 life to an untimely close. He died on the 23rd

A.D. of April 1616, of what disease we have no certain knowledge. In a *Diary* by John Ward,

a vicar of Stratford-on-Avon, written between 1648 and 1679, it is stated that the poet drank too much at a merry meeting with Drayton and Jonson, and took a fever in consequence, of which he died; but this story is considered an exaggeration. His wife survived him seven years; his only son had gone to the grave before him; and long before the close of the century that saw this great poet die, all the descendants of William Shakespeare had perished from the face of the earth. From the dim, uncertain story of his life, and the speedy blighting of his family tree, withered in its third generation, let us turn to the magnificent works which have won for this London actor the fame of being certainly England's—perhaps the world's—greatest poet.

Seven years after the poet's death a volume, known to students of Shakespeare as the "First Folio,"

1623 was published by his two professional friends,

A.D. John Heming and Henry Condell. This book contained thirty-six plays; seven more were

added in the Third Folio; but of these seven, only the play of *Pericles* is received as in part genuine. The plays of Shakespeare, therefore, so far as the battling of critics has agreed upon their number, are thirty-six or thirty-seven, according as we accept or reject *Titus Andronicus*. And these have been corrected and re-corrected, altered and revised, mended and re-mended, until we must have a very true and pure text of the poet in this century of ours—unless, indeed, something may have happened to certain passages, like that which the fable tells us happened to Jason's

ship, the *Argo*, in which he sought the Golden Fleece. So carefully did a grateful and reverent nation patch up the decaying timbers of the old craft, as she lay high and dry on the Greek shore, that in process of time it became a serious question among learned men whether much of the old ship was left together after all. The books written about Shakespeare and his works would of themselves fill a respectable library.

The thirty-seven plays are classed as Tragedies, Comedies, and Histories. The great Tragedies are five—*Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, and the *Merchant of Venice* are perhaps the finest Comedies ; while *Richard the Third*, *Coriolanus*, and *Julius Cæsar* stand prominently out among the noble series of Histories. The student who knows these eleven plays knows Shakespeare in his finest vein. Yet fat and vinous old Jack Falstaff, whose portrait is the happiest in all the varied range of English comedy, must be sought for in other scenes. Indeed, to know Shakespeare as he ought to be known, we must read him right through from first to last ; and in days when our most brilliant essayists draw illustrations from this exhaustless mine, when every newspaper and magazine fills its pages with allusions to Shallow or Dogberry, Malvolio or Mercutio, and every orator borrows some Shakespearean line to gild his meaner language—not to have studied the prince of poets thoroughly, proves not merely the absence of a fine literary taste, but the total lack of that common-sense which leads men to aim at knowing well and clearly every subject that may help them in their daily life.

The grand, surpassing quality of Shakespeare's genius was its *creative* power. Coleridge, who saw perhaps deeper into the unfathomed depths of the poet's spirit than any man has done, calls him the *myriad-minded* Shakespeare, and speaks of his *oceanic* mind. And well the dramatist deserves such magnificent epithets,

for no writer has ever created a host of characters so numerous, so varied, and yet so completely distinct from one another. The door of his fancy opened as if of its own accord, and out trooped such a procession as the world had never seen. The bloodiest crimes and the broadest fun were represented there ; the fresh, silvery laughter of girls and the maniac shriekings of a wretched old man, the stern music of war and the roar of tavern rioters, mingled with a thousand other various sounds, yet no discordant note was heard in the chorus. So true and subtle an interpreter of the human soul, in its myriad moods, has never written novel, play, or poem ; yet he drew but little from the life around him. The revels with Raleigh and Jonson at the Mermaid and the Falcon may have suggested some hints for the pictures of life in the Boar's Head Tavern, Eastcheap. The court of Elizabeth and the greenwood that embowered Stratford doubtless supplied material for many brilliant and lovely scenes. But those characters which were not drawn from the page of history are chiefly the creations of his own inexhaustible imagination ; and often, when he does adopt a historic portraiture, the colouring is nearly all his own. Many of us read Shakespeare before we read history, and take our ideas of historical heroes rather from his masterly idealizations than from the soberer painting of the historian's pencil. So deeply rooted, for example, are our early-caught notions of Macbeth's villainy and Richard Crookback's appalling guilt that it is with somewhat of a startle and recoil we come in our later reading upon other and milder views of these Shakespearean criminals. And read as we may, we can never get wholly rid of the magic spell with which the poet's genius has enchained us.

The language of Shakespeare has been censured for its obscurity. " It is full of new words in new senses." There are lines and passages upon whose impenetrable granite the brains of critics and commentators

have been well-nigh dashed out; and yet their meaning is still uncertain. Another fault is the frequent use of puns and verbal quibbles, where, quite out of place and keeping, they jar harshly upon the feelings of the reader. Yet these are spots upon the sun, forgotten while we drink his light into our souls—discoverable only by the cold eyes of those critics who read for business, not delight.

Besides his plays, Shakespeare wrote various poems : *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, *The Passionate Pilgrim*, *A Lover's Complaint*, and one hundred and fifty-four *Sonnets*. Of these he published the first two himself; the rest were pirated. The *Venus and Adonis*, which formed the first fruits of his ripening powers, was published in 1593, with a dedication to Lord Southampton.

Dr. Johnson says, in his Preface to Shakespeare's Works: "He that tries to recommend him by select quotations will succeed like the pedant in Hierocles, who, when he offered his house to sale, carried a brick in his pocket as a specimen." The comparison is witty and just; yet, in pursuance of our plan, we must select a few specimens of Shakespeare's style. The first extract illustrates the poet's tragic power; the second shows him in a light and playful mood.

MACBETH.—ACT II., SCENE I.

*Macbeth*.—Is this a dagger, which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee :—  
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.  
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible  
To feeling, as to sight? or art thou but  
A dagger of the mind; a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?  
I see thee yet, in form as palpable  
As this which now I draw.  
Thou marshal'st me the way that I was going;  
And such an instrument I was to use.  
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,  
Or else wrth all the rest: I see thee still;  
And on thy blade and dudgeon, gouts of blood,  
Which was not so before.—There's no such thing:  
It is the bloody business, which informs  
Thus to mine eyes.—Now o'er the one half world



Nature seems dead ; and wicked dreams abuse  
 The curtain'd sleep ; now witchcraft celebrates  
 Pale Hecate's offerings ; and withered murder,  
 Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,  
 Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,  
 With Tarquin's ravishing strides, toward his design  
 Moves like a ghost.—Thou sure and firm-set earth,  
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear  
 Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,  
 And take the present horror from the time,  
 Which now suits with it.—Whiles I threat, he lives ;  
 Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.  
 I go, and it is done ; the bell invites me. [A bell rings.  
 Hear it not, Duncan ; for it is a knell  
 That summons thee to heaven, or to hell.

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ROMEO AND JULIET.—ACT I., SCENE 4.

*Mercutio*.—Oh, then, I see, Queen Mab hath been with you.  
 She is the fairies' midwife ; and she comes  
 In shape no bigger than an agate-stone  
 On the forefinger of an alderman,  
 Drawn with a team of little atomies  
 Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep :  
 Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs ;  
 The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers ;  
 The traces, of the smallest spider's web ;  
 The collars, of the moonshine's wat'ry beams :  
 Her whip, of cricket's bone ; the lash, of film :  
 Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,  
 Not half so big as a round little worm  
 Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid :  
 Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,  
 Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,  
 Time out of mind the fairies' coach-makers.  
 And in this state she gallops night by night  
 Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love :  
 On courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight :  
 O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees :  
 O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,  
 Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,  
 Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.  
 Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,  
 And then dreams he of smelling out a suit :  
 And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,  
 Tickling a parson's nose, as 'a lies asleep,  
 Then dreams he of another benefice :  
 Sometimes she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,  
 And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,  
 Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,  
 Of healths five fathom deep ; and then anon  
 Drums in his ear ; at which he starts, and wakes ;  
 And, being thus frightened, swears a prayer or two,  
 And sleeps again.

TWELFTH NIGHT.—ACT II., SCENE 3.

O mistress mine, where are you roaming ?  
 Oh, stay and hear ; your true love's coming,  
 That can sing both high and low :  
 Trip no further, pretty sweeting ;  
 Journeys end in lovers meeting,  
 Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love ? 'tis not hereafter ;  
 Present mirth hath present laughter ;  
 What's to come is still unsure :  
 In delay there lies no plenty ;  
 Then come kiss me, sweet-and-twenty,  
 Youth's a stuff will not endure.

## CHAPTER X.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

Born 1552 A.D. . . . . Beheaded 1618 A.D.

No English writer ever lived a more romantic life than Raleigh. Born in 1552 at Hayes, in Devonshire, and educated at Oriel College, Oxford, he entered at the age of seventeen upon his brilliant and adventurous career as a soldier in the cause of the French Protestants. For more than five years he fought in Continental wars ; but in 1578 a new field of action was opened to his daring spirit. It was the time when Britain began to take her first steps towards winning that ocean-crown which she now so proudly wears. And among the dauntless sailors who braved the sweltering calms of the tropics and the icy breath of the northern seas in search of new dominions, Raleigh was one of the foremost. With his half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who perished at sea in a later voyage, he sailed to North America ; but after two years of toil he returned home, richer in nothing but hard-won experience. We then find young Captain Raleigh engaged in Ireland on active service against the rebel Desmonds, winning high

honours by his bravery and military talent, and rewarded by being chosen to bear dispatches from the Lord-Lieutenant to the queen.

His court life now began. Hitherto, we picture him keeping watch upon deck of a frosty night at sea, or, in dusty and bloodstained doublet, sleeping off the exhaustion of a hard battle-day. A scene of courtly splendour now opens to our view; and prominent among the plumed and jewelled circle gathered round the throne stands Sir Walter Raleigh, high in the favour of his queen, the associate or rival of the proudest noble there. The legend of his first introduction to Elizabeth is too romantic to be omitted, although we must not forget that it rests only on tradition. When the queen, in walking, one day came to a muddy place—these were very common on English roads and pathways then—she stopped and hesitated. Raleigh, seeing her pause, with ready tact flung down his rich plush cloak for her to step on. A capital investment it was that the young soldier made. He lost his cloak, but he gained the favour of a queen who well knew how to honour and reward those she loved. Within a few years he became a knight, Captain of the Guard, and Seneschal of Cornwall, besides receiving a grant of 12,000 acres of Irish land, and the sole right of licensing winesellers in England.

His attempts to colonize North America, for which a patent had been granted to him, went far to exhaust his fortune. Twice he sent out expeditions, supplied with all necessary stores; but the red men, who swarmed in the woods along the shore, would not suffer the colonies to take root. The first settlers escaped with their lives on board Drake's ships; the second band perished under the tomahawk. Tobacco and the potato were brought to Europe, as the only fruits of these unhappy enterprises. The name Virginia, given to the colony in honour of the unmarried Elizabeth, and the name Raleigh, applied to the

capital of North Carolina, still remind our transatlantic kindred of the ancient ties that bind them to the motherland.

A leader of English ships in the great conflict with the Armada, the courted and prosperous owner of the broad acres of Sherborne in Dorsetshire, the disgraced husband of Elizabeth Throgmorton, the gallant explorer of the Orinoco and its neighbouring shores, the hero of the siege of Cadiz and the capture of Fayal—such were the various characters filled by this English Bayard during the last years of Elizabeth's reign.

Scarcely was James the First seated on the throne when there came a change. Raleigh's former associate, Cecil, poisoned the king's mind so much against him that he was stripped of nearly all his honours and rewards. A worse blow was then aimed at him. Charged with having joined in a plot to seize the king and set Lady Arabella Stuart on the throne, he was brought to trial at Winchester Castle. 1603 From eight in the morning till nearly midnight A.D. he fronted his enemies with unshaken courage. The bluster of Attorney-General Coke roared around him without effect. "I want words," stormed the great prosecutor, "to express thy viperous treasons!" "True," said Raleigh, "for you have spoken the same thing half a dozen times over already." But rare wit and eloquence did not save Raleigh from the Tower, where he was left to lie for nearly thirteen weary years. Much of his time within these walls was devoted to chemical experiments, in course of which he sought eagerly for the philosopher's stone, and believed at one time that he had discovered an elixir which would cure all diseases. But what made his imprisonment a memorable era in the annals of English literature was the composition in his cell of his great *History of the World*. This work, in the preparation of which he was aided by other able hands, is chiefly valuable for its spirited histories of Greece and Rome. A fine antique eloquence flows from his pen,

enriched with a deep learning, which excites wonder when displayed by Raleigh. The soldier, the sailor, or the courtier is hardly the man from whom we expect profound philosophy or deep research; yet Raleigh showed by this achievement a power of thought and style at least not inferior to his skill with sword or compass. That part of the *History* which he was able to complete, opening with the Creation, closes with the second Macedonian war, about one hundred and sixty-eight years before Christ. A deep tinge of melancholy, caught from the sombre walls that were ever frowning on his task, pervades the pages of the great book.

A penniless king, dazzled by the story of an unwrought gold mine, discovered years ago during a cruise up the Orinoco, at length set the prisoner free, and sent him with twelve ships to make sure of this far-off treasure. The capture of St. Thomas, a Spanish settlement on the banks of the great river, produced only two bars of gold; and with "brains broken," as he told his wife in a letter, Raleigh was forced to sail away, a baffled man, leaving in a foreign grave the body of his eldest son, Walter, who had been killed in the assault. The rage of the Spaniards, who considered all these rich regions their own by right of prior discovery, kindled into flame when the news of this daring move reached Europe. With a cry of "Pirates! pirates!" the Spanish ambassador at London rushed into the presence-chamber of King James to demand vengeance on the slayer of his kinsman, who had been governor of St. Thomas, and reparation for the insult offered to his country's flag.

James had good reasons just then for desiring  
 Oct. 29, to please the Spanish court, since one of his  
 1618 dearest wishes was to marry his son Charles  
 A.D. to the Infanta. Landing at Plymouth,

Raleigh was arrested in the king's name on his way to London. A few months later, he was executed at Whitehall upon the old charge of treason,

for which he had already suffered so many years of imprisonment. Almost his last words, as he lifted the axe and ran his fingers along its keen edge, show with what feelings he fronted death. Smiling, he said, "This is a sharp medicine, but it will cure all diseases."

Besides his great work, a *Narrative of his Voyage to Guiana*, which proceeded from his pen in 1596, is worthy of being named. He wrote many other prose works, and cultivated poetry with such success that Edmund Spenser calls him the "Summer's Nightingale."

#### THE CONCLUSION OF RALEIGH'S HISTORY.

If we seek a reason of the succession and continuance of this boundless ambition in mortal men, we may add to that which hath been already said, that the kings and princes of the world have always laid before them the actions, but not the ends, of those great ones which preceded them. They are always transported with the glory of the one, but they never mind the misery of the other, till they find the experience in themselves. They neglect the advice of God, while they enjoy life or hope it; but they follow the counsel of Death upon his first approach. It is he that puts into man all the wisdom of the world, without speaking a word which God, with all the words of His law, promises, or threats, doth not infuse. Death, which hateth and destroyeth man, is believed; God, which hath made him and loves him, is always deferred. . . . It is Death alone that can suddenly make man to know himself. He tells the proud and insolent that they are but abjects, and humbles them at the instant, makes them cry, complain, and repent—yea, even to hate their forepast happiness. He takes the account of the rich, and proves him a beggar, a naked beggar, which hath interest in nothing but the gravel that fills his mouth. He holds a glass before the eyes of the most beautiful, and makes them see therein their deformity and rottenness, and they acknowledge it.

Oh, eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world, and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it over with these two narrow words—*Hic JACET*.

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## CHAPTER XI. .

FRANCIS BACON, VISCOUNT ST. ALBANS.

Born 1561 A.D. . . . . Died 1626 A.D.

"MY name and memory I leave to foreign nations, and to mine own country after some time is passed over," wrote Bacon in his will. There is no greater name among the many writers of English prose, no prouder memory among the host of philosophers who have spent their best years and ripest powers in exploring the secrets and tracing the laws of the universe; but many blots lie dark upon the reputation of the man. Of late, however, much has been done by Mr. Spedding and others to efface these stains from the fame of one of our leading English philosophers and writers.

At York House in the Strand, London, Francis, younger son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England, was born on January 22,

1561. As the boy grew, he was noted for a quick wit and precocious gravity, which led the queen, a frequent visitor at his father's house, to call him her little Lord Keeper. At twelve he went to Cambridge, where he studied for two years, and where the deepest impression he received was a dislike to the philosophy of Aristotle.

Then, in accordance with the custom of the time, he joined the suite of Sir Amyas Paulet, who was going on an embassy to France. A worse school for a young man of rank could scarcely be found than was the brilliant and voluptuous court of France in that day. Yet Bacon seems to have been proof against its worst seductions, imbibing, however, during his residence abroad, that taste for magnificence and display which kept him through all his life a needy man, and proved a source of much misery and sin. Something of a woman's nature appears to have

mingled with the qualities of his early manhood ; his love of beauty displayed itself in a passion for rich dress and furniture, birds, flowers, perfumes, and fine scenery. It might certainly have taken a less innocent and more destructive shape. During his stay in France he spent much time at Poitiers, employed chiefly in collecting materials for his maiden work, entitled *Of the State of Europe*.

Recalled to England in 1579 by his father's sudden death, he settled down to study law, with little money but a great mind, in Gray's Inn. In 1582 he was called to the bar ; and in 1584 he obtained 1582 a seat in the Commons for Melcombe. When A.D. the dapper, richly-dressed youth of twenty-three, whose round rosy face was new to the House, first rose to speak, indifference speedily changed to curiosity, and curiosity to deep attention. It was felt by all that the young lawyer, already well known in the courts, was a man of no common powers. Even then the main idea of his life, so nobly carried out in his great system of philosophy, began to develop itself in his speeches. "Reform" was his motto ; and for this he fought hard in the earlier years of his public life.

At the opening of his career he made a great mistake, fatal to his happiness and fatal to his fame. He lived beyond his means, and thus became hampered with debt, from which he never quite got free. In conjunction with his brother he set up a coach, for which some excuse may be found in the fact that even at this early age he suffered severely from gout and ague. He was forced to borrow from the Jews ; and it might often have gone hard with the young men in their city lodging had not their mother, Lady Anne, sent frequent supplies of ale and poultry in from Gorhambury.

Looked coldly on by his relatives the Cecils, he became a partisan of Essex, who tried hard to get him made Solicitor-General. But Burleigh and his

clan were too strong for the earl, and Bacon was defeated. To console him for this reverse, Essex gave him the beautiful estate of Twickenham Park, which he afterwards sold for £1,800; and there, under the spreading cedars, the hard-worked lawyer, dried up for many a week in the hot and dusty courts, used gladly to enjoy his riverside holidays.

But Bacon soon saw that Essex was a dangerous friend, and after earnest remonstrances from the lawyer, which the earl appears to have despised, the connection between them was dissolved. Through the remaining years of Elizabeth's reign, Bacon, who had already become member for Middlesex and a Queen's Counsel, continued to rise in the House. All that he could do to save Essex he did; at the risk of offending the touchy old queen he pleaded the cause of his former friend and patron. But every effort was rendered useless by the mad folly of the earl, who had been spoiled by the doting Elizabeth. Forgiven again and again, he persisted in trying to kindle a rebellion; and after his failure in London he died on the scaffold. Bacon has been charged with base ingratitude and treachery in this case of Essex. But he could not save a man who rushed so blindly on to death. What he could do he seems to have done. His public office enabled him to deal more gently with the foolish earl than a stranger might have dealt. And when at the queen's command he drew up a paper declaring the treasons of Essex, its lenient tone made the angry Elizabeth cry out, "I see old love is not easily forgotten."

Through these changeful years Bacon had been writing some of the celebrated *Essays*, which form his chief English work, and entitle him to a  
 1597 high rank among the masters of English prose.  
 A.D. When first published in 1597, the *Essays* were only ten in number; but others were added in 1612, and after his fall he spent much time in expanding and retouching them.

These years were also marked by a disappointment in love. A rich young widow named Lady Hatton was the object of his hopes; but his great rival at the Bar proved also a formidable rival in the court of love. Attorney-General Coke stepped in and bore away the prize.

However, the wound soon healed, for in 1606 an elderly bridegroom of forty-five, richly clad in purple Genoa velvet, stood at the altar beside a young bride in cloth of silver. The lady was the daughter of a Cheapside merchant, Alice Barnham, who on that day changed her name to Lady Bacon. Sir Francis had been lately knighted by King James.

From the Solicitor-Generalship, won in 1607, he stepped on in 1613 to the rank of Attorney-General; in 1616 he became a Privy Councillor; and in 1618 he reached the summit of his profession, being made Lord High Chancellor of England with the title of Baron Verulam. Thus at last had Bacon beaten Coke, his rival in love, in law, and in ambition.

For three years he held the seals as chancellor, and great was the splendour of his life. Baron Verulam soon became Viscount St. Albans. But the glitter of costly lace and the sheen of gilded coaches, of which these years were full, grow dim and tarnished before a splendour that cannot fade. The Lord Chancellor, with his titles of honour, is almost forgotten when the author of the *Novum Organum* rises in our view. This celebrated work, of which more will soon be said, appeared in 1620; A.D. and the pains which Bacon took to make it worthy of his fame may be judged from the fact that he copied and corrected it twelve times before he gave it to the world.

The greatest of Bacon's works was yet fresh from the press when dark clouds began to gather round its author. Coke, his bitter foe, and others whom the poison of envy had also tainted, raised a clamour

against the chancellor for taking bribes. Undoubtedly Bacon was guilty of the crime, for his extravagance and love of show drained his purse continually, and a needy man is often mean. But it may be said, in extenuation of his fault, that it was the common practice in that day for judges to receive fees

1621 and gifts; indeed, the greater part of their  
A.D. income was derived from such sources. A

case, containing twenty-three distinct charges of bribery and corruption, being prepared by the House of Commons, the Lords proceeded to sit in judgment upon the highest lawyer in the land. Humbled by the disgrace of his impeachment, and broken down by a fierce attack of his old enemy the gout, the great philosopher sent to the Lords a full confession of his faults. "It is," said he to some of his brother peers who came to ask if this was his own voluntary act, "it is my act—my hand—my heart. O my lords, spare a broken reed!" So fell the Viscount St. Albans from his lofty place, sentenced to pay a fine of £40,000, and to lie in the Tower during the pleasure of the king. James was magnanimous enough to remit the fine, and to set the fallen lawyer free in a few days.

The evening of this chequered life was spent chiefly in country retirement at Gorhambury. Books, experiments, and a quiet game at bowls were the chief recreations of the degraded statesman. His busy hours were spent in the revisal and enlargement of his *Essays*, the composition of his *History of King Henry the Seventh*, a philosophical romance called *The New Atlantis*, and that part of his great work which relates to Natural History. Heavy debts still hung upon him. He applied for the Provostship of Eton,

1626 but failed. The story of his death is curious.

A.D. Driving in his carriage one snowy day, the thought struck him that flesh might be preserved as well by snow as by salt. At once he stopped, went into a cottage by the road, bought a



DR. JOHNSON IN LORD CHESTERFIELD'S ANTEROOM, WAITING FOR AN AUDIENCE, 1748.  
*From the picture by E. M. Ward, R.A., in the Tate Gallery.*





fowl, and with his own hands stuffed it full of snow. Feeling chilly and too unwell to go home, he went to the house of the Earl of Arundel, which was near. There he was put into a damp bed ; fever ensued ; and in a few days he was no more.

The scale upon which the ground-plan of Bacon's great work is drawn is very magnificent ; but no single human mind, working within the compass of a human life, could hope to accomplish the grand design. Yet even to have grasped the idea of such a plan is sufficient warrant of a mighty genius. While working at his law books and briefs in Gray's Inn, the thought had dawned upon his mind ; and through thirty years of uphill labour at the Bar and fierce political struggles in the House he was steadily collecting materials to fill in the outlines of his colossal sketch. An English treatise on the *Advancement of Learning*, published in 1605, was the herald of the greater work, which appeared in his brightest days to gild them with a lustre brighter still—a lustre, too, which even his sad disgrace could not wholly dim. The plan of the work, which was written in Latin and was styled *Instauratio Magna*, may be understood from the following view :—

- I. *De Augmentis Scientiarum*.—This treatise, in which the English work on the *Advancement of Learning* is embodied, gives a general summary of human knowledge, taking special notice of gaps and imperfections in science.
- II. *Novum Organum*.—This work explains the new logic, or inductive method of reasoning, upon which his philosophy is founded. Out of nine sections, into which he divides the subject, the first only is handled with any fullness, the other eight being merely named.
- III. *Sylva Sylvarum*.—This part was designed to give a complete view of what we call Natural Philosophy and Natural History. The subjects he

has touched on under this head are four—the History of Winds, of Life and Death, of Density and Rarity, of Sound and Hearing.

IV. *Scala Intellectûs*.—Of this we have only a few of the opening pages.

V. *Prodromi*.—A few fragments only were written.

VI. *Philosophia Secunda*.—Never executed.

*The Essays, or Counsels Civil and Moral*, of which ten were published in 1597, were afterwards greatly increased in number and extent, being especially enriched with the brighter blossoms of their great author's matured fancy. In this respect—that his fancy was more vivid in age than in youth—the mind of Bacon formed an exception to the common rule; for, in general, the fancy of a young man grows less bright as his reason grows strong, just as the coloured petals of a flower fade and drop to make room for the solid substance of the fruit. Though often stiff and grave, even where a lighter style would better suit his theme, as in treating of Gardens and Buildings, the *Essays* stand, and have always stood, among the finest works of our prose literature. What Hallam says of this classic book should not be forgotten: "It would be derogatory to a man of the slightest claim to polite letters were he unacquainted with the *Essays* of Bacon."

#### ON LEARNING.

Learning taketh away the wildness, and barbarism, and fierceness of men's minds: though a little superficial learning doth rather work a contrary effect. It taketh away all levity, temerity, and insolency, by copious suggestion of all doubts and difficulties, and acquainting the mind to balance reasons on both sides, and to turn back the first offers and conceits of the kind, and to accept of nothing but examined and tried. It taketh away vain admiration of anything, which is the root of all weakness: for all things are admired, either because they are new, or because they are great. For novelty, no man wadeth in learning or contemplation thoroughly, but with that printed in his heart, "I know nothing." Neither can any man marvel at the play of puppets, that goeth behind the curtain, and adviseth well of the motion. And as for magnitude, as Alexander the Great, after that he was used to great armies, and the great conquests of the spacious provinces in Asia, when he received letters

out of Greece, of some fights and services there, which were commonly for a passage or fort or some walled town at the most, he said, "It seemed to him that he was advertised of the battle of the frogs and the mice, that the old tales went of;"—so certainly, if a man meditate upon the universal frame of nature, the earth with men upon it, the divineness of souls excepted, will not seem much other than an ant-hill, where some ants carry corn, and some carry their young, and some go empty, and all to and fro a little heap of dust. It taketh away or mitigateth fear of death, or adverse fortune, which is one of the greatest impediments of virtue, and imperfections of manners. For if a man's mind be deeply seasoned with the consideration of the mortality and corruptible nature of things, he will easily concur with Epictetus, who went forth one day, and saw a woman weeping for her pitcher of earth that was broken; and went forth the next day, and saw a woman weeping for her son that was dead; and thereupon said, "Yesterday I saw a fragile thing broken, to-day I have seen a mortal thing die." And therefore Virgil did excellently and profoundly couple the knowledge of causes and the conquest of all fears together.

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## CHAPTER XII.

BEN JONSON.

Born 1573 A.D. . . . . Died 1637 A.D.

A SQUARE time-worn stone, bearing the words, "O rare Ben Jonson," marks the spot where the remains of the great English dramatist lie buried in Westminster. Not far from this simple monument the poet was born in 1573, a few days after the death of his father, who was a clergyman. A hard and rugged life lay before the fatherless boy, and his sorrows soon began. His mother having married a bricklayer—not so great a descent from her former marriage as might at first sight seem to us, for the lower clergy were then the equals only of servants and tradesmen—young Ben was taken from his studies at Westminster School, and forced to carry a hod among his father's workmen. The sturdy boy, who had a soul above brick and mortar, rebelled at this, and in no long time was shouldering a pike on the battlegrounds of the Low Countries. The rough life that he saw

during this phase of his changeful story had a powerful influence upon his character and habits. When in later times he mingled among the silken courtiers of Elizabeth and James, he never lost a certain bearishness of temper and braggart loudness of tone, which he had caught in early days in the revels of the bivouac and the guardroom. His short soldier life over, Fuller says he entered St. John's College, Cambridge, but there is no evidence of his having done so.

Driven perhaps by poverty, perhaps by natural tastes and the desire to shine, he went on the stage, making his first appearance on the boards of a theatre near Clerkenwell. This plunge into the troubled waters of an actor's life might have cured him of his passion for the stage, for it was a miserable failure. But he clung to the vocation he had embraced; and to his poor earnings as a third or fourth rate actor he began to add the still more precarious gains of a theatrical author. And all this when he was only twenty years of age.

A duel with a brother actor, whom unhappily he killed, exposed him to the charge of murder, and he lay for some time in jail. Soon after his release he sprang at once into fame by the production of his play, *Every Man in his Humour* (1596). How strange it seems to us, who reverence the name so deeply, to read

that William Shakespeare was one of the company who acted the revised comedy at the 1598 A.D. Globe in 1598! We can hardly realize the fact that the writer of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* was only a third-rate player. Jonson followed up this successful hit with eager industry, and for some time every year produced its play. The greatest men of the day became the intimates of the author. At the Mermaid Club, founded by Raleigh, and adorned by the membership of Shakespeare and other great brothers of the dramatic craft, Jonson was a leading wit. Like his burly namesake of the eighteenth century, he was a man of solid learning and great con-

versational powers ; and his social qualities, kindled by the sack, which he loved too well, made him a most attractive companion. The Falcon at Southwark and the Old Devil at Temple Bar were the favourite tavern-haunts of Ben and his friends.

This rough and roaring life was chequered by several noteworthy events. The publication of a comedy called *Eastward Hoe*, which in 1605 proceeded from the pens of a literary partnership of three—Jonson, Chapman, and Marston—excited the anger of King James by some hits at the unwelcome presence of the Scots in England. For his share in this work Jonson went to prison with his friends, and for some time our poet's nose and ears were in considerable danger. But the storm blowing over, he regained his freedom. In 1618, after receiving the appointment of poet-laureate, he travelled on foot to Scotland, whence his family had sprung, and there he paid a three weeks' visit to Drummond of Hawthornden.

The composition of court masques and lighter poems filled up some easy years of Jonson's life, which was agreeably varied by visits to his distinguished friends, correspondence with learned men at home and abroad, and the collection of rare books—a pursuit in which he took especial pleasure. But debt and the ravages of paralysis upon a frame he had never spared, cast a gloom over his last years. The malice of a former friend, Inigo Jones, the architect, shut the golden doors of court life against the poor sick laureate. His salary, never well paid, came dribbling in so slowly that he was compelled to write begging letters to some of his noble friends ; who, to their honour be it said, did not refuse their aid. On August 6, 1637, he died, and three days after was buried in an upright posture in the north aisle of Westminster Abbey. A workman, hired for eighteen pence by the charity of a casual visitor, cut upon the gravestone covering the poet's clay the four short words, "O Rare Ben Jonson !" which form his only epitaph.



The works of Jonson, numbering in all about fifty, may be classed under four heads: his Tragedies, stately, cold, and classical; his Comedies, full of the colour and fire of real life, and abounding in varieties of character, which are rendered the more striking by a very decided tinge of exaggeration; \* his Masques and Interludes, forming the bulk of his writings, and nearly all produced during his brilliant days at court; and his finely-written Prose notes, containing some good sound criticism upon Bacon and other men of literary renown. Studying his dramatic works, like gems of the purest water and the finest cutting, are numerous songs, which have not been surpassed by any of our English lyrists. His principal tragedies are *Catiline* and *Sejanus*, founded upon two of the darkest pages of Roman history. *Every Man in his Humour*, *The Alchemist*, and *Volpone* are his finest comedies; and an unfinished pastoral, *The Sad Shepherd*, touched with the gloom of his dying days, may well stand beside these works, if we can judge of the half-done picture, when the colours are dry upon the palette, and the brush has fallen for ever from the painter's hand. His prose notes bore the odd title, *Timber; or, Discoveries made upon Men and Matter*.

## CAPTAIN BOBADIL AND THE ARMY.

(FROM "EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR.")

*Bobadil*.—I will tell you, sir, by the way of private, and under seal, I am a gentleman, and live here obscure, and to myself; but were I known to her Majesty and the lords (observe me), I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of her subjects in general, but to save the one-half, nay, three parts of her yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. . . . I would select nineteen more, to myself, throughout the land; gentlemen they should be of good spirit, strong and able constitution; I would choose them by an instinct, a character that I have: and I would teach these nineteen the special rules, as your punto, your reverso, your stoccata, your imbroccato, your passado, your montanto, till they could all

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\* He has hence been styled the "humorous poet"—not in our modern sense of that word, but as a skilful painter of those subtle shades of temper which are called "humours."

play very near, or altogether as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong, we twenty would come into the field the tenth of March, or thereabouts, and we would challenge twenty of the enemy; they could not in their honour refuse us; well, we would kill them; challenge twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them too; and thus would we kill every man his twenty a day, that's twenty score; twenty score, that's two hundred; two hundred a day five days, a thousand; forty thousand: forty times five, five times forty, two hundred days kills them all up by computation. And this will I venture my poor gentleman-like carcass to perform, provided there be no treason practised on us, by fair and discreet manhood; that is, civilly by the sword.

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TO CELIA.

Drink to me only with thine eyes,  
 And I will pledge with mine;  
 Or leave a kiss but in the cup,  
 And I'll not look for wine.  
 The thirst that from the soul doth rise,  
 Doth ask a drink divine:  
 But might I of Jove's nectar sup,  
 I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,  
 Not so much honouring thee,  
 As giving it a hope that there  
 It could not withered be;  
 But thou thereon didst only breathe,  
 And sent'st it back to me;  
 Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,  
 Not of itself, but thee.

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CHAPTER XIII.

OTHER WRITERS OF THE THIRD ERA.

POETS.

THOMAS TUSSEK, born in Essex about 1524, wrote an agricultural poem, called the *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry*, which in simple verse gives a good picture of English peasant life at that day. He died about 1580.

ROBERT GREENE, one of Shakespeare's predecessors in the dramatic art, was born at Norwich about 1560. Having received his education at Cambridge, he trav-

elled in Italy and Spain, and on his return to London plunged deep into the lowest debauchery. From about 1584 his pen was busied in the production of plays and love-pamphlets, which soon made him very popular. A surfeit of pickled herrings and Rhenish wine threw him into a mortal sickness, during which he was supported by a poor shoemaker. His miserable and premature death took place in 1592. More than forty works are ascribed to his pen. He takes rank among our early English dramatists, next but long after Marlowe.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL, whose short and suffering life began in 1561, was a native of Horsham St. Faith's, near Norwich. Educated at the English college of Douay, he entered the Society of Jesuits at sixteen. In 1586 he returned to England as a missionary, and there he laboured for six years in secret, penal laws being then extreme. Arrested at last, he lay in prison for three years, and in 1595 was hanged at Tyburn tree. His poems, of which the longest are *St. Peter's Complaint* and *Mary Magdalene's Funeral Tears*, being chiefly written in prison, have a tone of deep melancholy and resignation.

SAMUEL DANIEL, born in 1562 near Taunton in Somersetshire, was a contemporary of Shakespeare and Jonson. His principal poems are, *A History of the Wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster*, and a dialogue in defence of learning, styled *Musophilus*. His education was received at Oxford; he was afterwards tutor to Anne Clifford, who became Countess of Pembroke; and with other court preferments he held a post somewhat like that of our poet-laureate. His death took place in 1619 on a farm in his native shire. Shut in his garden-house in Old Street, St. Luke's, he gave up the best part of a quiet, studious life to the composition of those graceful and pensive works whose style obtained for him the name of "The well-linguaged Daniel."

MICHAEL DRAYTON, author of the *Polyolbion*, was

born at Hartshill, near Atherstone, in Warwickshire, about 1563, and to have begun life as a page. This threw him into the society of noble patrons, by whom his talents were soon recognized. The *Polyolbion*, finished in 1622, takes a poetical ramble over England, collecting together, in thirty ponderous books, descriptions of scenery, wild country legends, antiquarian notes, and various other gleanings from the land. In spite of an unhappy subject, the genius of a true poet shines out in many passages of this work. Among Drayton's other works are historical poems entitled the *Barons' Wars* and *England's Heroical Epistles*, and an exquisite fairy piece called *Nymphidia*. Dying in 1631, he found a tomb in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE merits somewhat longer notice than any other of our earliest dramatists, for it was he who prepared the way for the mighty creations of Shakespeare, by establishing the use of a lofty and polished blank verse in our English plays. Born at Canterbury in 1564, he passed to Cambridge, where he graduated as M.A. in 1587. Like some other wild-living university men of that day, he took to the stage as a means of earning his daily bread, and, what perhaps he valued more, of paying his daily tavern bill. This riotous, licentious life came to a sad and speedy end. He had barely reached the age of thirty when he died, the victim of a low pot-house scuffle. A serving-man, whom he was struggling to stab, seizing his wrist, turned the point of his own dagger upon himself. It pierced through his eye to the brain, and he died of the wound not long afterwards.

Marlowe's first great play, *Tamburlaine the Great*, is thought to have been brought out while the author's name was still on the Cambridge books. Then followed *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*, in which noble justice is done to the weird story that haunts the memory of the great printer of Mayence. *The*

*Jew of Malta*, and *Edward II.*, a historical drama, are the chief remaining works of Marlowe. The first of these probably suggested Shakespeare's Shylock, while the second may have turned the pen of our greatest dramatist into the field of English history. Though much disfigured with bombastic rant, the style of Marlowe, when uplifted by a great theme, often reaches a grandeur and a power to which few poets attain.

SIR HENRY WOTTON, a gentleman of Kent, born there at Boughton Place in 1568, may be named among the poets of his time. He was ambassador at Venice, and afterwards Provost of Eton—the friend of Izaak Walton, and an early discoverer of Milton's transcendent merit. The *Reliquiæ Wottonianæ* were published in 1651, twelve years after the author's death.

JOHN DONNE, Dean of St. Paul's, was born in London in 1573. He deserves remembrance as a very learned man, who began the list of what critics call the Metaphysical poets. Beneath the artificial incrustations which characterize this school, Donne displays a fine vein of poetic feeling. He is also noted in our literary history as the first writer of satire in rhyming couplets. Upon his death in 1631 his body was buried in St. Paul's.

FRANCIS BEAUMONT and JOHN FLETCHER united their high talents in the production of fifty-two plays. In this dramatic partnership Beaumont probably followed the bent of his mind by writing chiefly tragedy. Fletcher, a lighter and more sunny spirit, leaned to the comic muse. Beaumont, the son of a judge, was born in Leicestershire in 1584; he studied at Oxford and the Inner Temple, but was cut off in the bloom of manhood in 1616. Fletcher, a bishop's son, was born in 1579, and died of the plague in 1625. The works of these men were very popular in their own day, even more so than those of Shakespeare and Jonson. They have about them an elegance, a spirit, and a light amusing wit, reflecting the gay sprightliness of the

upper classes to which their authors belonged ; and, like all Elizabethan works, they have moments of high tragic eloquence.

PHINEAS and GILES FLETCHER were cousins of the dramatist. Phineas, who was Rector of Hilgay, in Norfolk, lived from 1582 to 1650. Giles, who was Rector of Alderton, in Suffolk, was the younger. He was born about 1588, and died in 1623. *The Purple Island* of Phineas is a poem descriptive of the human body with its rivers of blood, and the human mind, of which Intellect is prince. From the pen of Giles came *Christ's Victory and Triumph*, a sacred poem—a work of much higher merit as a whole.

PHILIP MASSINGER, a great dramatist of his day, was born in 1583. Of his life we know absolutely nothing, but that he spent a year or two at Oxford ; wrote plays for the London theatres after 1606 ; like many of his theatrical brethren found his money sometimes running low ; and one morning in 1640 was found dead in his bed at Southwark. Eighteen of his plays have lived ; but only one, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, is much read. Sir Giles Overreach, a greedy, crafty, money-getter, is the great character of this drama. A calm and dignified style, with little passionate fire, characterizes the pen of Massinger.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND of Hawthornden, near Edinburgh, born in 1585, was the finest Scottish poet of his day. Living by the romantic Esk, he caught a deeper inspiration from its beauty. Though not a poet-laureate by appointment, he had all the feelings of one, and lavishly poured forth his verses in praise of royalty. *The Flowers of Zion*, *Tears on the Death of Mæliades* (Prince Henry), *The River of Forth Feasting*, and his *Sonnets*, are his chief poetical works. Ben Jonson paid him a visit at Hawthornden, and the Scottish poet has been blamed for making notes, not always complimentary, of his rough guest's habits and character. These notes, however, he did not publish himself. Drummond died in 1649.



JOHN FORD, a Devonshire man, born in 1586, was another of the brilliant dramatic brotherhood adorning this period. High tragedy was Ford's excellence. Uniting dramatic authorship with his practice as a lawyer, he contrived to avoid those abysses of debt and drink in which many brightening stars of the time quenched their young lustre. Hallam says that Ford has "the power over tears;" but his themes are often so revolting that compassion freezes into disgust. Three of his tragedies are *The Lover's Melancholy*, *Love's Sacrifice*, and *The Broken Heart*. He wrote also a historical play, *Perkin Warbeck*. Ford probably died about 1656.

THOMAS CAREW, born in 1598, of Cornish ancestry, was one of the brilliant courtier poets who clustered round the throne of the first Charles. His lyrics are, on the whole, graceful and flowing. The masque, *Cælum Britannicum*, is a work from his pen produced by order of the king.

WILLIAM BROWNE, born in 1591, was a native of Tavistock, in Devonshire. He wrote pastoral poetry, taking his inspiration from Spenser. His life was chiefly spent in two noble families, those of Carnarvon and Pembroke. *Britannia's Pastorals* is the name of his chief work. It is rich in landscape painting, but utterly conventional in the display of character. Browne died in 1643 at Ottery-St.-Mary in his native shire.

ROBERT HERRICK, poet and divine, was perhaps the sweetest of the Iyristis who sang in the seventeenth century. Born in Cheapside, London, in 1591, and educated at Cambridge, he became, in 1629, Vicar of Dean Prior, in Devonshire. During the Civil War and the Commonwealth he lived at Westminster, but at the Restoration went back to his green Devonshire parish, an old man of almost seventy, tired and sick, no doubt, of the convivial life he had spent among the London taverns. He died in 1674. There is a cheerful grace, a light and happy sparkle, in the poetry

of Herrick ; many of his lyrics are matchless. *To Blossoms, To Daffodils, Gather ye Rosebuds while ye may*—names like these suggest the sources whence his verses draw their many-coloured beauty. Flowers, birds, fruit, gems, pretty women, and little children are his favourite themes.

FRANCIS QUARLES, born in 1592 in Essex, having occupied some courtly positions, became Chronologer to the City of London. Though a keen Royalist, suffering the loss of his books and manuscripts in that cause, his poetical works, which form an extravagant specimen of the Metaphysical school, have something of the Puritan tone about them. He died in 1644.

GEORGE HERBERT, Rector of Bemerton, in Wiltshire, and younger brother of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, was born at Montgomery Castle, Wales, in 1593. Before entering the Church he lived a gay life at court. He too wrote in the strained style of Donne's school ; but his chief work, *The Temple*, a collection of sacred poems, is filled with solemn, saintly music. His pure and active life came to an untimely end in 1633.

JAMES SHIRLEY, born in London in 1596, was the last of the Elizabethan dramatists. Possessing less fire and force than the rest, he excels them in purity of thought and expression. The true poet shines out in many passages of his plays. He gave up the curacy of St. Albans when he embraced the Roman Catholic faith ; and after holding the mastership in the grammar school in that town, he went to London to write for bread. The great fire of 1666 burned him out of house and home ; and a little after, in one of the suburbs of London, his wife and he died on the same day.

RICHARD CRASHAW was a Fellow of Peterhouse College, Cambridge, and took holy orders. In France he became a Roman Catholic, and having passed to Italy, was made a sub-canon of Loretto. His religious poetry, and his translations from Latin and Italian, are of the first order, though somewhat marred by

the affectations of the time. He died in Italy in August 1649.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING, born in 1609, came at eighteen into a great fortune. Having served under the Swedish banner in the Thirty Years' War, he returned to England, to shine as a brilliant but passing meteor in the court of Charles the First. More desirous, perhaps, to win the fame of a skilful gamester and gallant than of a literary man, he yet, in the quieter hours of a feverish life, produced some beautiful lyrics. Detected in a plot to set Strafford free, he fled to France, where he died in 1642. Aubrey says he committed suicide by poison; but according to another story his valet killed him with a razor, after having robbed him. His *Ballad on a Wedding* and many of his songs are exquisite specimens of their kind.

#### PROSE WRITERS.

THOMAS WILSON was a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and afterwards lay Dean of Durham, who wrote about 1553 a *System of Rhetoric and Logic*, considered to be the first critical work upon the English tongue. He strongly recommends the use of a simple English style.

WILLIAM CAMDEN, the antiquary and writer of history, was born in London in 1551, and received his higher education at Oxford. Much of his earlier life was spent in connection with Westminster School, in which he was successively second and head master. He afterwards became Clarencieux King-at-arms. The *Britannia* is his great work. Written in Latin, it is especially devoted to a description of the antiquities of his native land. He wrote, besides other works, Latin narratives of *Queen Elizabeth's Reign* and the *Gunpowder Plot*. He died in 1623.

RICHARD HAKLUYT and SAMUEL PURCHAS were two English clergymen, who, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, compiled books of travel and geographical discovery. Hakluyt's chief work, of which the third volume was completed in 1600, com-

prised an account of all the *Principal Voyages undertaken within the Previous 1,500 Years*. He was an associate and helper of Sir Walter Raleigh in the work of colonizing North America. The chief work of the other writer, bearing the quaint title of *Purchas his Pilgrims*, appeared in 1625. Another volume, entitled *Purchas his Pilgrimage*, had been already published. Hakluyt died in 1616; Purchas, in 1626.

KING JAMES THE FIRST of England got rid of his superfluous learning in the shape of certain literary works. Among his productions three are specially remembered, but rather for the amusement than the delight which they afford. His *Dæmonologie* defends his belief in witches in a most erudite dialogue. His *Basilicon Doron* was written in Scotland to leaven Prince Henry's mind with his own notions and opinions. His *Counterblast Against Tobacco* lifts a strenuous but often very comical voice against the growing use of that plant. Poems, too, in both English and Latin came from this royal pen.

JOSEPH HALL, Bishop of Norwich, was born in Leicestershire in 1574. Distinguished as the author of vigorous poetical satires, he deserves yet greater praise for his sermons and other prose writings. His *Contemplations on Historical Passages of the Old and New Testament* and his *Occasional Meditations* form his chief works. He died at a good old age in 1656.

ROBERT BURTON, a native of Lindley, in Leicestershire, was born in 1577. Though Rector of Segrave in his own shire, he lived chiefly at Christchurch College, Oxford, where he wrote his famous work, *The Anatomy of Melancholy, by Democritus Junior*. This quaint and witty book, which is crammed with learned quotations, and with curious gleanings from works that few men ever read, became a public favourite at once. Laurence Sterne has been convicted of stealing brilliants from Burton to mingle with the tinsel and the paste of his own sentimentalities. A short poem on Melancholy, containing twelve stanzas, opens the *Anatomy*. Bur-

ton's life was chequered with moods of deep depression, to relieve which he wrote his famous book. He died in 1639.

THOMAS DEKKER, a wild and penniless dramatist who produced above twenty plays, wrote, among other prose works, *The Gull's Hornbook*, a satirical guide to the follies of London life, which was published in 1609. Dekker died about 1638.

LORD HERBERT of Cherbury was born in 1583 at Eyton, in Shropshire, and was educated at Oxford. Though noted for his deistic works, of which the chief is entitled *De Veritate*, he deserves our chief remembrance for his *Life and Reign of Henry the Eighth*, published in 1649. *Memoirs of his own Life* were printed more than a century after his death, which took place in 1648.

JAMES USSHER, Archbishop of Armagh, was born in Dublin in 1581. While Professor of Divinity in Trinity College, Dublin, he became noted as a theologian and controversialist. A treatise, called *The Power of the Prince and Obedience of the Subject*, written in the reign of Charles the First, fully displayed his Royalist opinions. In 1641 he was obliged by the war in Ireland to take refuge at Oxford, and after many changes of abode, he died in 1656 at Reigate, in Surrey. He won his chief fame, as a chronologer, by the publication (1650-54) of the *Annals*, a view of general history from the Creation to the Fall of Jerusalem.

JOHN SELDEN, born in 1584 near Worthing, in Sussex, earned the distinguished praise from Milton of being "the chief of learned men reputed in this land." Educated at Oxford, he studied law in the London schools. Besides several histories and antiquarian works written in Latin, he was the author of an English book called *A Treatise on Titles of Honour*, which, published in 1614, is still highly valued by heralds and genealogists. His *History of Tithes* (1618) excited the rage of the clergy and drew a rebuke from

the king. As a member of the Long Parliament, he took a leading part in the politics of the day, but was opposed to the Civil War. Appointed in 1644 Keeper of the Records in the Tower, he continued to write until his death in 1654. Some time after his death his secretary, who had been acting the Boswell to this Puritan Johnson, published the *Table-talk* that had dropped from his learned lips during twenty years.

THOMAS HOBBS was born at Malmesbury in 1588. Some years of his earlier life were spent in travelling on the Continent as tutor to Lord Cavendish, afterwards Earl of Devonshire. After a residence at Chatsworth, he was obliged to hide himself and his Royalist doctrines at Paris in 1640; and there some years later he became mathematical tutor to the Prince of Wales. He published four works, dealing with politics and moral philosophy, which gave deep offence to the friends of religion and constitutional government. The principal of these works he called *Leviathan* (1651); and the key-note of his whole system there developed is the doctrine that all our notions of right and wrong depend on self-interest alone. Works of a different kind from the pen of Hobbes are his *Translation of Homer in Verse*, and his *Behemoth, a History of the Civil Wars*. He died in December 1679.

IZAACK WALTON, who wielded pen and fishing-rod with equal love and skill, was born at Stafford in 1593. He kept a linen draper's shop in Cornhill, and then in Fleet Street, London; retired from business in 1643, and lived afterwards for forty years to enjoy his favourite pursuit. His memory is dear to every lover of our literature for the delightful book he has left us, redolent of wild flowers and sweet country air—*The Complete Angler, or Contemplative Man's Recreation* (1653). *The Lives of Donne, Wotton, Hooker, George Herbert, and Bishop Sanderson*, written with beautiful simplicity, remain also as fruits of honest Izaak's old age. He died in 1683 at the age of ninety.



JAMES HOWELL, born in Caermarthenshire about 1594, spent much of his life travelling on the Continent, as agent for a glass-work, as tutor to a young gentleman, and as a political official. Returning home, he was made in 1642 clerk to the Council; was imprisoned in the Fleet by order of the Parliament; became historiographer-royal in 1661, and died five years later. His *Familiar Letters* (published in four instalments, 1645-55), giving, in lively, picturesque language, sketches of his foreign observations, mingled with philosophical remarks, have gained for him the reputation of being the earliest contributor to our epistolary literature. He wrote altogether about forty works.

## FOURTH ERA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

FROM THE SHUTTING OF THE THEATRES IN 1648 A.D.  
TO THE DEATH OF MILTON IN 1674 A.D.

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### CHAPTER I.

PURITANS AND CAVALIERS—THEIR INFLUENCE UPON  
ENGLISH LITERATURE.

JOSTLING in London streets, and scowling as they passed each other on leafy country roads; grappling in deadly conflict upon many a battlefield from Edgehill to Naseby; resting upon hacked sword or bloody ash-wood pike only till the leaping heart was still enough to begin the strife again—Puritans and Cavaliers stand out in violent contrast during that period of English history which is filled with the great central struggle of the seventeenth century. Close and deadly though their occasional collision, the currents of their domestic lives flowed far apart—the one, a brilliant stream flashing along its noisy way, and toying with its flowery banks, all unheeding of the great deep to which its waters ran—the other, a dark, strong, and solemn river, sweeping sternly on to its goal between rugged shores of cold gray stone.

The violence of the opposition between Puritan and Cavalier was strikingly expressed by the difference of their dress and of their amusements. The Cavalier (the word was borrowed from the Spanish) in full

dress wore a brilliant silk or satin doublet with slashed sleeves, a falling collar of rich point lace, a short cloak hanging carelessly from one shoulder, and a broad-leafed, low-crowned hat of Flemish beaver, from which floated one or two graceful feathers. His broad sword-belt, supporting a Spanish rapier, was a marvel of costly embroidered work. A laced buff coat and silken sash sometimes took the place of the doublet; and when the steel gorget was buckled over this, the gallant Cavalier was ready for the fray. Long waves of curled hair, rippling on the shoulders, formed a graceful framework for the finely moulded features of a high-bred English gentleman; and to this class of the nation the Cavaliers for the most part belonged. But, unhappily, these silks and ringlets filled the taverns and surrounded the gaming-tables of London by night and day. Great fortunes were lost then, as in later times, on a single throw of the dice; and many a fair-plumed hat was dashed fiercely with curses in the mud, when the half-sobered reveller, staggering with torn and wine-splashed finery out of the tavern into the cold gray light of the breaking day, found every gold piece vanished from his shrunken purse. Well might he pluck at the dishevelled love-lock—special eyesore to the Puritans—which hung over his pallid brow, and curse his drunken folly. Such a life lived many of the Cavaliers. Tennis, billiards, drinking, masquerading, dressing, intriguing, composing and singing love songs, filled their days and their nights. A few were flung out from the fatal circles with ruined fortune and broken health, to find nothing left them but a painful dragging out of days in some lonely country manor; or, if the pure air and quiet hours restored them, a life of exile, as a soldier in some foreign service, and then, perhaps, a grave in unknown soil. Yet even all this vicious round could not destroy the quality of Englishmen. Gallantly and gaily did Rupert's horsemen, the very flower of the Cavaliers, ride in the face of hailing

bullets upon the Puritan musketeers. We cannot but respect the bravery of the men who rallied so loyally round the banner of their king, and for the cause of monarchy spilt their blood on English battlefields as carelessly and gaily as if they were pouring out bumpers of red wine in the taverns by St. Paul's.

The literature of the Cavaliers matched their character. The poetry was chiefly lyric—sparkling, spontaneous effusions of genius. Herrick, Suckling, Waller, and Lovelace were the chief poets of the Cavaliers; and the works of all proclaim their birthplace and their sustenance. The Cavalier was graceful and gay, polite and polished; so are the verses of Lovelace and his brother bards. The Cavalier was dissipated, and often vicious; there are many works of these men that bear deep stains of vice. History on the Cavalier side is best represented by Lord Clarendon; theology, by the witty Thomas Fuller and the brilliant Jeremy Taylor. The quaint oddities of the former divine, and the gentle pictures, rich in lovely images, with which the sermons of the latter are studded, afford the most pleasing examples of English literature written in the Cavalier tradition.

Of a totally different stamp were the Puritan and his writings. Instead of the silk, satin, and lace which decked his gay antagonists, he affected usually a grave sobriety of dress and manners, which should place him at the utmost possible distance from the fashion of the vain world from which he sought to separate himself. His tastes were simple, his pleasures moderate, and his behaviour reverent and circumspect. Living in an atmosphere of habitual seriousness, the Bible was much in his hands and its sacred words often on his lips; while disdaining lighter recreations, he often found his chief enjoyment in the hearing of sermons and the singing of psalms. As in other days of high religious fervour, his children at their baptism were called by sacred names, either drawn from the genealogical lists of Old Testament

times, or expressive of his Christian faith and hope. That the performance of the stage, such as it then was, steeped in a shameless licentiousness which shocked alike good men of every party, should be the object of his utter abhorrence, was a matter of course ; but with it were rejected other sports and pastimes of a less questionable kind, but which were still, in his view, inseparably mixed up with sin—as the mistletoe, the boar's head, and the country games around the Maypole, decorated with green and flowering boughs. Opposed, in short, to the riotous and dashing Cavaliers, both in political and religious views, the Puritans strove to draw the line as sharply as possible between themselves and their gaily attired antagonists, and to stand in every respect as far apart from these godless revellers as they could. A profound religious thoughtfulness was the root, in the character of the English Puritans, out of which grew their great works of the pen.

The period of the Civil War was too full of hurry and bloodshed to be prolific in any but controversial writings. One princely work, indeed, the *Areopagitica* of Milton, lifted its lofty voice above the clash of swords and the roll of musketry, its noble eloquence undimmed by the tumult. Liberty was the grand stake for which the English Puritans were then playing at the game of war ; and there was among them one, the grandest intellect of all, who could not stand idly by and see professing champions of the sacred cause—fellow-soldiers by his own side in the great battle of freedom—lay, in their blindness, the heavy fetter of a *license* on the English press. To Milton the freedom of human thought and speech was a far grander aim than even the relief of the English people from the tyranny of a king.

When the Civil War was over, and Charles rested in his grave, the day of Roundhead triumph came. Yet not the proudest period of the Puritan literature. Pure in many things, as its name proclaimed it, the

Puritan mind needed to pass through a fiery furnace before its dross was quite purged away, and the fine gold shone out with clearest lustre.

While the Cavalier poets had been stringing their garlands of artificial blossoms in the heated air of the Stuart court, Milton had been weaving his sweet chaplets of unfading flowers in the meadows of Horton. It was not in the nature of things that the great Puritan poet should pass through the trying hours of conflict and of triumph without many stains of earth deepening on his spirit. To purge these away required suffering in many shapes—blindness, bitterness of soul, threatening ruin, and narrowness of means. Yet bodily affliction and political disgrace could not break his spirit. From a fall which would have laid a feebler man still in his coffin, Milton arose with his noblest poem completed in his hand. And Milton's noblest poem is the crown and glory of our English literature. What more needs to be said of Puritan influence upon English letters than that Puritan Milton wrote the *Paradise Lost*?

Puritanism acted powerfully, too, upon our English prose, finding its highest expression under this form in the works of John Bunyan and Richard Baxter. Here also the fervour of religious earnestness leavens the whole mass. A massive strength and solemn elevation of tone form the grand characteristics of a school in which the naked majesty of the Divine perhaps too much overshadows the tenderness and gentleness of the human element. The stern work of those sad times was little fitted to nourish in the breasts of good men those feelings from which bright thoughts and happy affections spring; but the worst enemy of these remarkable men cannot deny that the mainspring of the Puritan mind, as displayed in written works and recorded actions, was a simple fear of God, and an overmastering desire to fulfil every duty, in the face of any consequences, no matter how perilous or painful.



## CHAPTER II.

THOMAS FULLER.

Born 1608 A.D. . . . . Died 1661 A.D.

“WORTHY old Fuller,” “quaint old Thomas Fuller,” are the affectionate names by which this English divine is often called. He was the son of a Northamptonshire clergyman, and was born in 1608 at Aldwinkle, a place rendered illustrious in later days by the birth of the poet Dryden. Passing from under the tuition of his father, he entered Queen’s College, Cambridge, in his thirteenth year. Ten years later he became a Fellow of Sidney Sussex. To follow the steps by which he rose in the Church would be out of place here ; it is sufficient to say that when he was little more than thirty years of age he had already won a distinguished reputation in the London pulpits, and had become Lecturer at the Savoy.

The clouds of the Civil War, charged with fire and blood, were fast darkening over Britain as Fuller laboured in this charge. Remembering that his Master had said, “Blessed are the peacemakers,” he lost no opportunity of striving to reconcile the parties that were every day drifting further apart. His sermons all pointed to this great and noble end ; his conversation in society was all woven of this golden thread. At last the deluge burst upon the land ; and the eloquent clergyman, upon whom the Parliament looked with jealous eyes, was forced to leave his pulpit, and betake himself to Oxford, where the king had fixed his court. Fuller’s moderation had obtained for him in London, with the Parliament at least, the name of a keen Royalist ; but now in the headquarters of the royal party, all hot for carnage, the same peace-loving temper caused him to be accused of a Puritan taint. His books and manuscripts were taken from him ; and there was no

resource left him but to join the royal army in the field. As chaplain to Sir Ralph Hopton, he moved with the royal troops from place to place, fulfilling his sacred duties faithfully, but employing his leisure in the collection of materials for a literary work. Wherever the tents were pitched, or the soldiers quartered, he took care to note down all the old legends afloat in the district, and to visit every place within reach which possessed any interest for the historian or the archæologist. No better preparation could have been made for the composition of *The Worthies of England*; and when we add to his own personal observations the gleanings of a wide correspondence, we shall form some idea of the industrious care with which Fuller built up a work that has contributed so largely to make his name famous. Camp life seems to have kindled something of warlike ardour in the peaceful chaplain's breast; for we read that, when Basing Hall was assailed by the Roundheads under Waller, after the battle of Cheriton Down, Fuller, who had been left by his patron in command of the garrison, bestirred himself so bravely in its defence that the besiegers were repulsed with heavy loss. After the downfall of the royal cause he lived for some years at Exeter, constantly engaged in preaching or writing. *Good Thoughts in Bad Times* and *Better Thoughts in Worse Times* are the titles of the two books which he is said to have written in this capital of south-western England.

After about two years of wandering he found himself once more in London, a worn man in what was in truth a changed place. For some time he preached where he could, until he obtained a permanent pulpit in St. Bride's, Fleet Street. Then, 1648 having passed the examination of the "Triers," A.D. he settled down in 1648 at Waltham Abbey, in Essex, to the rectory of which he had been presented by the Earl of Carlisle. During the bloody year which followed, and the eleven years of interreg-

num, his pen and voice were busy as ever in the cause of truth. In spite of Cromwell's interdict he continued to preach, and in 1655 his *Church History of Britain from the Birth of Christ to the Year 1648* was given to the world.

The Restoration brought him once more prominently into view. He received again his lectureship at the Savoy, and his prebendal stall at Salisbury; he was chosen chaplain to the king, and created Doctor of Divinity by the authorities of Cambridge. But Fuller's day was near its close. Scarcely had he worn these honours for a year when he sank into Aug. 16, the grave, smitten by a violent fever, which 1661 was then known as "the new disease." Two A.D. hundred of his brother ministers in sad procession followed his coffin to the tomb.

Thomas Fuller is chiefly remembered for two works—his *Church History of Britain*, published in 1655, and his *Worthies of England*, published the year after his death. The latter is his greatest work. Begun during his wanderings with the royal army, and continued through all the changes of his after life, this quaint, delightful collection of literary odds and ends deals not alone with the personal history of eminent Englishmen, as the name would seem to imply, but also with botany, topography, architecture, antiquities, and a host of other things connected with the shires in which they were born. The queer but very telling wit of Fuller sparkles in every line. He possessed in an eminent degree that curious felicity of language which condenses a vast store of wisdom into a few brief and pithy words; so that maxims and aphorisms may be culled by the hundred from the pages of his books. The *Church History* was condemned in the author's own day for its "fun and quibble;" but there was nothing venomous or foul in the fun of Fuller, which has well been called "the sweetest-blooded wit that was ever infused into man or book." As well might we chide the lark for its

song, as this gentle parson for his pleasant jokes and quaint conceits. Besides the works already mentioned, Fuller wrote *The History of the Holy War, Holy and Profane State, A Pisgah View of Palestine*, and very many *Essays, Tracts, and Sermons*.

## THE SEA.

(FROM "THE HOLY STATE.")

Tell me, ye naturalists, who sounded the first march and retreat to the tide, "Hither shalt thou come, and no further"? Why doth not the water recover his right over the earth, being higher in nature? Whence came the salt, and who first boiled it, which made so much brine? When the winds are not only wild in a storm, but even stark mad in an hurricane, who is it that restores them again to their wits, and brings them asleep in a calm? Who made the mighty whales, which swim in a sea of water, and have a sea of oil swimming in them? Who first taught the water to imitate the creatures on land, so that the sea is the stable of horse-fishes, the stall of kine-fishes, the sty of hog-fishes, the kennel of dog-fishes, and in all things the sea the ape of the land? Whence grows the ambergris in the sea? which is not so hard to find where it is as to know what it is. Was not God the first shipwright? and have not all vessels on the water descended from the loins (or ribs rather) of Noah's ark? or else, who durst be so bold, with a few crooked boards nailed together, a stick standing upright, and a rag tied to it, to adventure into the ocean? What loadstone first touched the loadstone? or how first fell it in love with the North, rather affecting that cold climate than the pleasant East, or fruitful South or West? How comes that stone to know more than men, and find the way to the land in a mist? In most of these, men take sanctuary at *occulta qualitas* (some hidden quality), and complain that the room is dark, when their eyes are blind. Indeed, they are God's wonders; and that seaman the greatest wonder of all for his blockishness, who, seeing them daily, neither takes notice of them, admires at them, nor is thankful for them.

## CHAPTER III.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

Born 1613 A.D. . . . . Died 1667 A.D.

THERE is no reason why the picturesque and the fanciful should be excluded from the oratory of the pulpit. As Christianity is emphatically the religion of man, and imparts to every element of his nature

at once its highest culture and its noblest consecration, so there is no faculty or power within him which does not admit of being devoted to its service. Within its catholic pale, the poet, the philosopher, the logician, the man of sentiment, and the man of abstract thought have each his place. Even the greatest of the apostles would be "all things to all men, if by any means he might save some." It was on this principle that Jeremy Taylor devoted the stores of his rich and brilliant fancy to the service of the Cross, lending all the charms of art to set forth the sanctity of truth. He strove to teach as did that Saviour whose minister he was; and therefore the lilies of the field and the birds of the air, the dashing sea, the roaring wind, the weeping sky, and a thousand other strong and lovely things scattered around him in the world, supplied him with lessons, whose familiar beauty charmed his hearers, and still charms his readers into rapt attention.

This "poet among preachers," the son of a poor but well-descended surgeon-barber, was born at Cambridge in 1613. Having received his elementary education at the Grammar School of his native town, he, when not yet fourteen, entered Caius College as a sizar—the humblest class of students. When he had studied at Cambridge for some years, he went to London; and there, by his handsome face and power of preaching, he attracted the notice of the great Archbishop Laud, who was then in the full blaze of power. Under the patronage of so noted a man the advancement of Taylor was rapid. Laud earnestly wished to establish him at Oxford, and in 1636 secured for him a fellowship at All Souls College. In 1638 he became, through Juxon, Bishop of London, the rector of Uppingham, in Rutlandshire; and to that quiet parsonage, two years later, he brought home his first wife, Phœbe Langsdale.

Then came the storm of the Civil War; and in the wreck of the throne the fortunes of Jeremy Taylor

suffered shipwreck too. His life at this period presents a striking resemblance to the life of Fuller. Like that witty priest, he joined the royal party at Oxford, accompanied the troops to the field in the capacity of chaplain, and took an active share in the hard work of the war. In the battle fought at Cardigan he was made prisoner by the Roundheads. His release, however, soon followed; and having no longer a home among the rich woodlands of Rutlandshire—for his rectory had been sequestrated by the Parliament—he resolved to cast his lot in the mountain-land of Wales, and calmly wait for better times. There, at Newton Hall, in Caermarthenshire, he set up a school in conjunction with two accomplished friends, who, like himself, had fallen upon evil days. Time slid away; King Charles was beheaded, and Oliver assumed the purple robe of Protector. Far away from the great centres of learning and distinction, girdled round by the huge Cambrian mountains, the Chrysostom of our English literature lived a peaceful but very busy life. His good friend John Evelyn, and his kind neighbour the Earl of Carbery, stretched out willing hands to help him in his need. His marriage with a lady who possessed an estate in Caermarthen relieved him from the wearing toil of the schoolroom. But if his life grew easier, he certainly did not relax in the work for which he was best fitted.

Ever labouring with his pen, he sent forth from his secluded dwelling-place book after book, enriched with the choicest fancies of a most poetic mind. But even the privacy of his life could not keep him entirely safe; fine and imprisonment fell heavily on him at various times during the ascendancy of the Puritans, against whom he spoke and wrote on some occasions very strongly. At last, probably weary of a retirement which did not shield him from his foes, he returned to London in 1657. An invitation from the Earl of Conway induced him, in the following year, to settle in the north of Ireland, where he officiated



as lecturer at Lisburn, and also at Portmore, a village on the shores of Lough Neagh. He fixed his residence at the latter place. Here, too, Puritan resentment found him out. An informer gave evidence that the minister of Lisburn had used the sign of the cross in baptism. Arrested with violence, Taylor was hurried in deep midwinter to answer before the Irish Council for his act. Exposure and anxiety brought on a fever, which did him the good office of softening the sentence of the court.

Soon afterwards, visiting London on literary business, he signed the Royalist declaration of April 24, 1660, and in the following month the joy-bells which rang in the Restoration of the second Charles sounded a note of preferment to Taylor. The bishopric of Down and Connor, to which was afterwards added the see of Dromore, rewarded the eloquent preacher, whose Royalist zeal had never languished. Yet, after all, this mitre was but the badge of an honourable but not an easy exile, in which Taylor spent his remaining years. A hard and thankless office it must have been for an English bishop to superintend an Irish diocese at that day. His nation and his faith were both unpopular. Congregations, driven by the terror of strict penal laws, crowded the churches every Sunday to hear a service which many of them could not understand, and which most of them regarded with the strongest dislike. Many of his clergy also, appointed under the old system of things, looked jealously on the authority of a bishop. Battling with difficulties so many and so great, Taylor must often have sighed after his quiet parsonage at Uppingham, or even after his schoolroom at Newton Hall. But he did his duty nobly in a most difficult position, until an attack of fever cut him off at the early age of fifty-five. His death took place at Lisburn in 1667.

Hallam characterizes the style of Jeremy Taylor's sermons as being far too Asiatic in their abundance of

ornament, and too much loaded with flower-garlands of quotation from other, especially classical, writers. Yet the great critic assigns to the great preacher the praise of being "the chief ornament of the English pulpit up to the middle of the seventeenth century"—an admission which does much to blunt the point of his censure.

Taylor does undoubtedly sometimes run riot in sweet metaphors, and lose his way in a maze of illustrations; but even so, is it not pleasanter and better to wander through a lovely garden, although the flowers are tangled together in a brilliant chaos and trip us as we walk, than to plod over dry and sandy wastes, where showers, if they ever fall, seem only to wash the green out of the parched and stunted grass?

Jeremy Taylor's most popular devotional work is his *Holy Living and Holy Dying*. Other works of the same class are *The Life of Christ* and *The Golden Grove*; of which the latter is a series of meditations named after the seat of Lord Carbery, his neighbour in Wales. These were all written in his Welsh retreat. There, too, he wrote a generous, liberal, and most eloquent plea for toleration in religious matters, entitled *The Liberty of Prophesying*,\* in the dedication of which he refers with pathetic beauty to the violence of the storm which had "dashed the vessel of the Church all in pieces," and had cast himself, a shipwrecked man, on the coast of Wales. His last great work, styled *Ductor Dubitantium*, treats of the guidance of the conscience, and is still considered our great standard English book on casuistry. But Taylor's style is not well suited to make clear a subject so difficult and intricate; nor does the plan which the author lays down aid in giving distinctness to his teaching.

\* *Prophesying* is here used in the sense of preaching. Compare its use in certain parts of the New Testament.

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## ON PRAYER.

Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention which presents our prayers in a right line to God. For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds ; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings, till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over ; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air, about his ministries here below. So is the prayer of a good man : when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with the infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument ; and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man : and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud ; and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention ; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose that prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God ; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy dove, and dwells with God, till it returns, like the useful bee, laden with a blessing and the dew of heaven.

## CHAPTER IV.

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EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON.

Born 1608 A.D. . . . . Died 1674 A.D.

FORMING the doorposts of a stable-yard attached to the Three Kings' Inn in Piccadilly there used to stand two old defaced Corinthian pillars, chipped, weather-stained, drab-painted, and bearing upon their faded acanthus crowns the signboard of the livery-stables. Hostlers lounged and smoked there ; passers-by gave no heed to the poor relics of a dead grandeur ; and the brown London mud bespattered them pitilessly from capital to base as rattling wheels jolted past over the uneven pavement. These pillars were all





STATUE TO JOHN MILTON IN FRONT OF ST. GILES,  
CRIPPLEGATE, WITHIN WHICH HE LIES BURIED.

that remained of a splendid palace which was reared upon that site by the famous Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon and Lord High Chancellor of England. It was built at an unhappy time, when England could but ill spare the £50,000 sunk in its gorgeous stonework, and when England's king and chancellor were hated by the people with a bitter hatred. So it was nicknamed Dunkirk House and Tangier Hall, and insulting couplets were chalked upon its gates by a howling rabble, who shivered its windows with stones, when the Dutch cannon were heard in the estuary of the Thames. Clarendon, who built it, was then near the day of his fall.

Already he had seen heavy reverses. When he left the pleasant lawns of Dinton, in Wiltshire, where he was born in 1608, to study at Oxford for the Church, and afterwards to pore over ponderous law-books in the chambers of the Middle Temple, he little foresaw either his splendid rise or his sad decline. Still less did he dream, in those golden days of youth, that out of the dark days of his second exile would come a book which should gild his name with even brighter lustre than statesmanship or devotion to his king could win for him. A chequered reputation on the page of history, and two old pillars in Piccadilly, might have been all that remained of the great lawyer's life-work, had not his brilliant pen raised a monument of eloquence imperishable while the English language lives.

As member for Wootton-Bassett he began his political career in 1640, having previously, though enjoying a considerable private fortune, devoted himself so earnestly to the practice of the law as to win by it much renown and many friends. His rise to royal favour was very speedy. Having aided the king most materially by writing several important papers, he was knighted in 1643, and made Chancellor of the Exchequer. But in spite of all that the swords of the Cavaliers or the eloquence of Hyde could do, the cause



of Charles declined, and it was judged right that the Prince of Wales should leave England.

Hyde 1646 accompanied the royal boy to Scilly and Jersey,

A.D. and in the former place he commenced his great

*History of the Rebellion*. It would be out of place here to trace the wanderings of his first exile. At the Hague he heard of the Whitehall tragedy. At Paris he shared the poverty of the future king—sometimes with neither clothes nor fire to keep out the winter cold, and often with not a *livre* he could call his own. All that the unfortunate, lazy, dissipated, uncrowned, and kingdomless monarch could do to recompense the fidelity of this devoted servant he did. He made him his Lord Chancellor—an empty name written on an empty purse, as things went then.

But soon came the Restoration, with its bells and flowers. Hyde, created Earl of Clarendon, became a real Lord Chancellor, entitled to sit on the

1660 actual woolsack. Then for seven years he was

A.D. the ruling spirit of English politics, and he

shares in some of the dark stains which lie upon the memory of King Charles the Second. The feeling of the nation grew strong against him. He lost the royal favour. In August 1667 he had to give up the Great Seal. He was subsequently impeached, though the Lords declined to commit him. Fleeing to the coast, he took ship at the village of Erith for the French shore. Louis proved unfriendly to the fallen statesman. From place to place the old man wandered, finding solace only in his pen. Seven years passed wearily by, gout racking his enfeebled frame. A plaintive petition in his last days entreated his heartless master's leave to die at home. "Seven years," he wrote, "was a time prescribed and limited by

God Himself for the expiration of some of His 1674 greatest judgments; and it is full that time

A.D. since I have, with all possible humility, sus-

tained the insupportable weight of the king's displeasure. Since it will be in nobody's power long

to prevent me from dying, methinks the desiring a place to die in should not be thought a great presumption." No answer came; and when the year 1674 was near its close, Clarendon breathed his last at Rouen.

The great Cavalier—prince of historical portrait painters—outlived the great Puritan—prince of epic poets—but a few days. Born in the same year, Clarendon and Milton stood all their lives apart, towering in rival greatness above their fellows in the grand struggle of their century. The year of the Restoration, which brought wealth and splendour to the Cavalier, plunged the blind old Puritan in bitter poverty. But a few years more, and the great earl, too, was stricken down from his lofty place, and sent a homeless wanderer to a stranger's land. To both, their sternest discipline was their greatest gain; for when the colours of hope and gladness had faded from the landscape of their lives, and nothing but a waste of splendourless days seemed to stretch in cheerless vista before them, they turned to the desk for solace, and found in the exercise of their literary skill not peace alone but fame. Milton wrote most of his great poem in blindness and disgrace; Clarendon completed his great history during a painful exile.

Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* (mark the Cavalier in the last word of this title) is not in all things a faithful picture of those terrible days. Nor is this wonderful, for the writer was absent from his native land during a great part of the eventful strife, which he designates by so scornful a name. It is very unequally written, here adorned with a passage of glowing eloquence, and there marred by a "ravelled sleeve" of sentences, tangled together in utter defiance of grammatical construction. Yet he is never, even in his most slovenly passages, obscure. It has been well remarked that his language is that of the speaker, not of the writer; and if we remember Hyde's training at the Bar, we shall cease to wonder at his off-

hand, careless style. When he sits down to paint the character of some celebrated man, his pencil seems dipped in the brightest hues, and, as touch after touch falls lovingly on the canvas, we feel that a master's hand is tracing the growing form. The *History* was published in 1704-7; its supplement and continuation, *History of the Civil War in Ireland*, in 1721; and the *Life of Edward, Earl of Clarendon*, in 1759. Another remarkable work of Clarendon is his *Essay on an Active and Contemplative Life*.

#### CHARACTER AND DEATH OF LORD FALKLAND.

(FROM THE "HISTORY OF THE REBELLION.")

When there was any overture or hope of peace, he would be more erect and vigorous, and exceedingly solicitous to press anything which he thought might promote it; and sitting among his friends, often after a deep silence, and frequent sighs, would, with a shrill and sad accent, ingeminate the word Peace, peace; and would passionately profess, "that the very agony of the war and the view of the calamities and desolation the kingdom did and must endure, took his sleep from him, and would shortly break his heart." This made some think, or pretend to think, "that he was so much enamoured of peace, that he would have been glad the king should have bought it at any price;" which was a most unreasonable calumny;—as if a man that was himself the most punctual and precise in every circumstance, that might reflect upon conscience or honour, could have wished the king to have committed a trespass against either. . . .

In the morning before the battle, as always upon action, he was very cheerful, and put himself into the first rank of the Lord Byron's regiment, then advancing upon the enemy, who had lined the hedges on both sides with musketeers; from whence he was shot with a musket in the lower part of the belly, and in the instant falling from his horse, his body was not found till the next morning; till when, there was some hope he might have been a prisoner, though his nearest friends, who knew his temper, received small comfort from that imagination. Thus fell that incomparable young man, in the four-and-thirtieth year of his age, having so much despatched the true business of life, that the eldest rarely attain to that immense knowledge, and the youngest enter not into the world with more innocency: whosoever leads such a life, needs be the less anxious upon how short warning it is taken from him.

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## CHAPTER V.

JOHN MILTON.

Born 1608 A.D. . . . . Died 1674 A.D.

A FINE sentence in Macaulay's noble fragment of an English History records the glory of John Milton :—

“A mightier poet, tried at once by pain, danger, poverty, obloquy, and blindness, meditated, undisturbed by the obscene tumult which raged all around him, a song so sublime and so holy that it would not have misbecome the lips of those ethereal Virtues whom he saw, with that inner eye which no calamity could darken, flinging down on the jasper pavement their crowns of amaranth and gold.”

If Milton had written not one line of verse, his richly jewelled and majestic prose would have raised him to a lofty rank among the Raleighs and the Bacons, the Taylors and the Gibbons of our English tongue; and if he had dropped the poet's lyre for ever, when he exchanged the green shades of Horton and the crystal skies of Italy for the smoke and din of London life and the heat of a great war, the songs already sung by the youthful Puritan bard had won a chaplet of unfading bays, at least as bright as those that decorate the brows of Dryden and of Pope. But when we add to these achievements the sublime and solemn anthem of his blind old age, the lustre of his life's work brightens to such intensity that there is but one name in the long roll of English writers which does not grow dim in the surpassing radiance of his fame. Shakespeare and Milton dwell apart from all, in a loftier region of their own. Great consuls in the mighty republic of English letters, to them alone belong the honours of the ivory chair, the robe with purple hem, and the rod-girt axe.

In the reign of Elizabeth a certain Richard Milton was under-ranger of Shotover Forest, not far from

Oxford. This was the poet's grandfather. A strict Roman Catholic, he disinherited his son for adopting the Protestant faith ; and this son, also a John Milton, having gone to London, set up as a scrivener, or notary-public, at the sign of the Spread Eagle in Bread Street. There, in the intervals of his professional will-drawing and money-lending, John Milton the scrivener wrote trifling verses and composed elaborate pieces of music. Under the wings of this

Spread Eagle, which seems to have shadowed  
1608 a very comfortable, happy home, was born, on

A.D. December 9, 1608, John Milton the poet, son  
of a Puritan scrivener, and grandson of a  
Roman Catholic ranger—receiving from his father  
literary tastes and a love of music, and from his  
mother a kind, gentle nature, and the sad inheritance  
of weak eyes.

The Puritan influences amid which the boy grew up moulded his character to a shape it never lost. Having received his earlier education at home from a Scotsman, Thomas Young, he went at about twelve years of age to St. Paul's school, which was then under the direction of a Mr. Gill. Even at that unripe age Milton's studious tastes showed themselves. Night after night he was up over his books till past twelve, and neither watering eyes nor increasing headaches could daunt the brave young worker. The midnight studies of the child cost the old man his enjoyment of heaven's light and earth's colouring. Yet even here there was a blessing in disguise, for the affliction which quenched the light of the body's eye deepened and strengthened the vision of that inner, spiritual eye "which no calamity could darken."

While yet a schoolboy, Milton could write capital Latin and Greek, either in verse or prose ; and knew something, too, of Hebrew. He had read with delight the poems of Spenser, and Sylvester's translation of the Frenchman Du Bartas, and had tried his boyish

pen on English verse by translating the 114th and 136th Psalms.

Christ's College, Cambridge, being chosen for the higher instruction of the youthful poet, he went thither in 1625 as a minor pensioner. 1625 His tutor was Chappell, afterwards Provost of A.D. Trinity College, Dublin, and Bishop of Cork.

What was the ground of dispute we cannot exactly tell, but a quarrel took place between tutor and pupil, so serious that Milton had to leave his college for a while.\* This incident Johnson exaggerates into rustication, insinuating on the same page that Milton was whipped at Cambridge. It is true that the rod, plied in the lower schools with systematic cruelty, had not yet been quite abandoned in the college classroom; but there is not sufficient ground for believing that Milton was flogged at college, merely because flogging at college was not quite done away with in his youthful days.

The delicate beauty of the student's face, with its shell-like pink and white, and the rolling masses of silken auburn hair, parted in the middle, that framed its oval contour, excited the jeers of some rougher classmates, who called him "The Lady of Christ's." They might well have spared their mockery. In the "winter wild" of 1629, Milton's twenty-first year, he composed his magnificent *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, which ranks among the finest specimens of lyrical poetry that any age or nation has produced. Yet Johnson, in his *Life of Milton*, does not even mention this great burst of song!

Having completed his course, and taken his 1632 degree of M.A., he left Cambridge in 1632, A.D. to spend five calm, delightful years in his father's country house at Horton, in Buckinghamshire.

It is impossible to doubt that the lovely pictures of Eden life which we find in the fourth and some suc-

\* It has been maintained by some historians that Milton never left his college at all.



ceeding books of *Paradise Lost*—sunny days and innocent enjoyments, shadowy rose-bowers, gentle labours amid vine and orchard, delicate fruit repasts, and sweet scenes of rosy morning and silver moonlight—were drawn from early memories of the Horton glades and gardens, idealized by poetic fancy.

Deep study, quiet country walks, and poetic composition, broken now and then by a run to London for books, or tuition in music and mathematics, filled up the days of the poet's rural life.

At Horton and on the Continent Milton spent the vacation period of his life—a happy six years' holiday intervening between his Cambridge study and his London school; and five poems, round which the scent of the hawthorn hedge is ever fresh and sweet, were the exercises which gave a zest to the enjoyment of these bright and careless years. *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Arcades*, *Comus*, and *Lycidas* were written at Horton. The country breezes seem to have swept off the gray shadows of the Cambridge rooms. How many verses were woven in the fragrant meadows, all embroidered with wild flowers, or by the edge of the silver stream, we do not know; but the odours and the colours of sweet rural life breathe and brighten in every line.

How curiously the life he lived is reflected in his works! As the sea wave takes the colour of the sky above it, the multitudinous billows of thought that roll in every human soul are tinged with the hues of the outward life. Place the *Ode on the Nativity* side by side with *L'Allegro*, and mark the contrasted tints. Residence within the "studious cloister's pale" has given to the one a stern gray awfulness, a pure classic beauty, which have but little in common with the frolicsome play and brown, healthy, country life that laugh and gambol in the other.

His mother's death in 1637 broke the charm that had bound him to Horton. There was nothing now to prevent him from starting upon his Continental tour,

and accordingly, in the following year, armed with advice and letters from Sir Henry Wotton, the Provost of Eton, he crossed the straits to France. We shall not follow him minutely on his journeyings. He was absent from England for fifteen months, during which he travelled through France and Italy, residing for a time in some of the principal cities. At Paris he met Hugo Grotius, the great Dutchman; at Florence he visited the blind old Galileo, who then lay in the prison of the Inquisition for daring to speak what he believed about the stars; at Rome he heard Leonora Baroni sing, and was welcomed with remarkable attention in the first circles of society; at Naples, beyond which he did not go, he was guided through the city by the Marquis of Villa, the friend and biographer of Tasso. The influence which Italian scenery, sculpture, and music had in kindling the imagination of the grave English Puritan and storing his memory with a wealth of classic thoughts that gave shape and colour to the ideas he had drawn from books among the woods of Horton, formed a most important element in the education of the poet for his great work. After visiting Venice and Geneva, among other places, he returned by way of France to England. The thought of writing an epic poem appears to have ripened to a purpose in Italy; but he had not yet chosen his great theme. The story of Arthur, or some other hero of ancient British days, seems at this time to have been floating before his mind.

The toils of a teacher's life and the composition of many prose works filled up the chief part of those ten years which elapsed between Milton's return from abroad and his appointment as Foreign Secretary (1639-1649). His poetic muse was all but silent. Six of these years were spent in a retired garden-house, up an entry off Aldersgate Street. There, with a few leaves and blossoms round him, shut in from the noisy street, he read with his pupils—among them his

own nephews, the Phillipses—an extensive course, comprising several uncommon classics, some Hebrew, a sprinkling of Chaldee and Syriac, mathematics and astronomy—not omitting the Greek Testament and some Dutch divinity on Sundays. His pen was at first almost wholly taken up with his bitter attacks upon Episcopacy, opening in 1641 with a pamphlet on *Reformation in England*, and closing with the best of the series, his *Apology for Smectymnuus*.\* To the seclusion of Aldersgate Street, Milton, a man of thirty-five, brought home his first bride—Mary, the daughter of Richard Powell, a Royalist Justice of the Peace, living at Forest Hill, near Shotover. It was a

1643 hasty marriage, and far from a happy one.

A.D. The young wife, who seems not to have fully counted the cost of such a change, had Cavalier notions of housekeeping and social life very unlike the quiet frugality of Milton's home. She missed the dancing and the laughter of Forest Hill. When the friends who had brought her home left the house, its gloom seemed to deepen tenfold; her grave and studious husband never thought of leaving his books and pen for a while, to cheer her loneliness until she became used to a domestic climate so unlike that which she had left. In a few weeks she returned to her father's house, seemingly to pay a short visit, but inwardly resolved to leave her serious bridegroom and his gloomy garden-house to keep each other company. He wrote, and got no reply; he sent, and his messenger was ill-treated. It was a clear case that John Milton was deserted by his wife.

His two pamphlets on *Divorce*, which were published in 1643 and 1644, are evidently the fruits of

1644 this matrimonial misery. \*Sweeter fruit, however, than these sour productions marks the latter year; for then was addressed to the

\* *Smectymnuus* is a word made up of the initials of the five names of those Puritan ministers who joined the strife on Milton's side. They were—Stephen Marshall, Edward Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William (UUilliam) Spurstow.

Parliament the celebrated *Areopagitica*, finest of all his prose compositions. His *Tractate on Education* appeared in the same year.

The estrangement between Milton and his wife having lasted for two years, a reconciliation took place in the house of a friend. Mary Milton, flinging herself in tears at her husband's feet, was once more taken to his home, which was now a large house in Barbican. So completely was the breach healed that the husband's door was opened to her ruined family, driven from Forest Hill by the fortunes of the Civil War; and in Milton's house old Richard Powell soon died.

His pupils having decreased in number about this time, the poet thought it prudent to take a backward step by removing into a smaller house. We soon find him in Holborn, where his residence had an entrance into Lincoln's Inn Fields. Here he wrote part of his *History of England*, and probably some of his compilations; and here, while the axe was 1649 falling on the neck of Charles Stuart, he was A.D. correcting the last proofs of a work entitled *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, which argued the lawfulness of that terrible deed. Published a week or two after the tragedy of Whitehall, the *Tenure* excited such admiring attention that the office of Foreign or Latin Secretary to the Council, worth about £290 a year, was offered to the author. Thus opened a new era of Milton's life.

The period of eleven years coming between the Regicide and the Restoration presents perhaps the deepest contrasts of light and shadow that we find in the chequered life of Milton. Appointed Secretary of Foreign Tongues, he removed to Charing Cross, and afterwards to the official apartments at Whitehall, which he occupied for about eighteen months. His direct duties were not heavy, consisting merely in conducting the foreign correspondence of the Council in Latin, which was then the language of diplomacy. But his pen was also required to do higher work than

the writing of state papers. The blood of an English king, crying from an English scaffold, had roused rage and horror throughout Europe; and Milton was selected by the Parliament to front the storm, and lay it if he could. In reply to the sad description of the suffering king, which was presented by the well-known *Eikon Basilike*, he wrote his *Eikonoklastes* (Image-breaker); in which, reviling the memory of Charles with a rancour alike unbecoming and unchristian, he smites with a rude and heavy hand the defender of dead majesty. To this period also belong his two great Latin works, *Defences for the People of England*; in which the voice of the Puritan is uplifted with somewhat more of dignity, and certainly with greater power. The first *Defence* was written in answer to Salmasius of Leyden, a philologer of European fame; whom the triumphant reply is said to have smitten so sorely to the heart that he died of the blow. But controversies like these are pitiful sights. It is sad to see a magnificent genius like Milton stooping to fling those paving-stones of abuse—"rogue, puppy, foul-mouthed wretch"—which come ready to the hand of every sot and shrew in England.

Why we do not know, but Milton soon left his Whitehall lodgings for a pretty garden-house in Petty France, Westminster, with an opening into St. James's Park. There about 1652 two heavy afflictions fell upon him. He lost his wife, Mary, who, with all her faults, had, since their reconciliation, kept his house prudently and well; and that paralysis of the optic nerve which had been coming on for years left him totally blind. Many symptoms had foretold the calamity. He saw an iris round the candle; his left eye, when used alone, diminished the size of the objects he looked at; things swam before his 1652 gaze; and at night, when he lay down and A.D. closed his eyes, there came for a time a flash of light and a play of brilliant colours. A blind and widowed man, with three little girls under

eight to look after, and a heavy load of public work to do, presents a sorrowful spectacle. Such was Milton's case in 1652.

In November 1656 he married again ; but his second wife, Catherine Woodcock, whom he dearly loved, died in fifteen months after their union. So his daughters grew up wild and undisciplined, to cost their father many a heart-ache in his declining days.

His blindness did not involve the loss of his office as Foreign Secretary. An assistant, and afterwards a colleague, aided him in the performance of his duties. This colleague in 1657 was his friend Andrew Marvell, who received, as Milton himself then did, the sum of £200 a year.

In spite of the gloom which blindness and bereavement had cast over the garden-house in Petty France, Milton must have enjoyed many hours of sober tranquillity there. His fame had spread far beyond the borders of his own land. To Continental strangers, Cromwell and Milton, the man of action and the man of thought, were the representative men of England. A few literary friends, too, often came to cheer his leisure hours. And, better than all, before the added darkness of poverty and despair deepened upon him, he had begun to soar into those starry realms of thought below which he had too long been walking with folded wings, busied with common cares. The first lines of *Paradise Lost* were lying in his desk.

The last state paper written by Milton bears date May 15, 1659. None but the most important work of the Foreign Office was done by his pen in the later years of the Commonwealth.

The Restoration brought gloom and terror to the household of the Puritan poet, who had written too many bitter things of the slain father to be easy in his mind at the return of the exiled 1660 son. For a time he was forced to hide him- A.D. self in a friend's house in Bartholomew Close. But influential admirers exerted their interest for him ;



and though the *Eikonoklastes* and the *Defences* were burned by the common hangman, and the writer was not included in the Act of Indemnity, he was given leave to settle down into safe obscurity. Obscurity it might have been to a common man, but to Milton it proved the brightest period of his life. The fresh laurels of the Cambridge student—the pastoral sweetness of the Horton poet—the polished graces of the traveller—the triumphs of the keen and bitter controversialist—the fame of the accomplished Latin Secretary—all grow dim beside the lustrous achievements of that blind old man, who was often to be seen on sunny days, in a coat of coarse gray cloth, sitting at the door of a mean house in Artillery Walk near Bunhill Fields. Through all changes and perils his unfailing solace must have been the composition of his great work. A young Quaker, Thomas Ellwood, came often of an afternoon to read Latin to the helpless poet; and this good friend it was who secured for him that cottage at Chalfont, in Buckinghamshire, where the Miltons took refuge from the Great Plague that ravaged London in 1665. The Quaker, who was tutor in a rich family of Chalfont, called upon the poet some time after he had settled down in his new abode. During the visit, Milton, calling for a manuscript, handed it to Ellwood, and bade him take it home to read. It was the newly-finished poem of *Paradise Lost*. Returning it after a while to his A.D. blind friend, Ellwood said, "Thou has said much here of *Paradise Lost*, but what hast thou to say of *Paradise Found*?" This casual remark led to the composition of the minor epic, *Paradise Regained*.

When the terrors of the Plague had passed, Milton returned to Bunhill Fields, prepared to dispose of his great poem. It seemed in many ways an unfortunate time for so heavy a venture. The Great Fire of 1666 had just laid the shops and dwellings of nearly all London in ashes. And wares made to find a ready

sale in that day needed to be highly spiced with choice blasphemies and indecencies. At length, however, a bookseller was found who consented to buy the poem. And a very hard bargain indeed did Mr. Samuel Simmons drive with ex-Secretary Milton. The terms agreed upon were these: £5 in hand, £5 on the sale of 1,300 copies of the first edition, and two similar sums on the sale of a like number of the second and third editions—no edition to exceed 1,500 copies. The poem was published in 1667, in 1667 the form of a small quarto, at three shillings. A.D. Milton was dead when the third edition of *Paradise Lost* appeared in 1678, and his widow surrendered all her claims on Simmons for the sum of £8. Thus, in all, to Milton and his heirs there came only £18 \* for this greatest poem of modern ages!

There is extant, in the poet's own handwriting, a receipt for the second sum of £5, dated 1669, which shows that at least 1,300 copies of the book had gone off in its first two years. That scrap of worn paper sufficiently refutes the statement, so often advanced in former days, that to all the other woes heaped on Milton's gray head, the neglect of the reading public was added as a last and worst infliction. Few sacred epics would command a larger sale even in these book-devouring days. Though Charles and his friends preferred the whimsical adventures of *Hudibras* to the lofty strains of *Paradise Lost*, there were thousands of

\* Some say £23 in all; but it is very unlikely that Simmons would go beyond the original £20 agreed on as the price of the poem. During Milton's life he received *two* payments of £5; when the 1,300 copies of the second edition were sold, his widow became entitled to the third £5; and she seems, rather than wait for the sale of the stipulated number of the third edition, to have preferred £3 in hand in addition to the sum due. This seems to us the meaning of her giving up all her claims on Simmons in 1678 for £8. If she had already received the fourth sum of £5, her claims had ceased to exist; and only by supposing that this fourth sum of £5 was included in the £8, can the total reach £23. The third edition was published in 1678, and no money was due on it until 1,300 copies had been sold. Hence the fourth £5 cannot have formed a part of the final settlement of £8.

men in England to read and love the noble verses of that veteran scholar, who had stood by the great Oliver in the palmy days of the Commonwealth, and had done with his pen for England's glory at least as much as the rugged Lord Protector had ever done with that weighty sword he bore.

In 1669 appeared Milton's *History of England*, and two years later *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* were published in a thin octavo. His last three years were occupied in preparing for the press several minor works in Latin and in English. The clouded close of his life was calm and peaceful, on the whole, although his undutiful daughters caused him much vexation. His third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, a young woman whom he had married soon after the Restoration, tended his declining years with care and affection.

Such a picture of old Milton's daily life as that which we subjoin possesses a peculiar value, in enabling us to bring nearer to our hearts the great English epic poet, who ranks with Homer, with Virgil, and with Dante.

"An ancient clergyman of Dorsetshire, Dr. Wright, found John Milton in a small chamber, hung with rusty green, sitting in an elbow-chair, and dressed neatly in black; pale, but not cadaverous; his hands and feet gouty, and with chalk-stones." \*

"In his latter years he retired every night at nine o'clock, and lay till four in summer, till five in winter; and if not disposed then to rise, he had some one to sit at his bedside and read to him. When he rose he had a chapter of the Hebrew Bible read for him; and then, with, of course, the intervention of breakfast, he studied till twelve. He then dined, took some exercise for an hour—generally in a chair, in which he used to swing himself—and afterwards played on the organ or the bass-viol, and either sang himself or made his wife sing, who, as he said, had a good voice, but no ear. He then resumed his studies till six, from

\* Richardson.

which hour till eight he conversed with those who came to visit him. He finally took a light supper, smoked a pipe of tobacco, and drank a glass of water, after which he retired to rest." \*

So calmly passed the days of the blind old poet, until, a month before the completion of his sixty-sixth year, he passed away. It was on Sunday, the 8th of November, that his death occurred. 1674 Gout, his old foe, had for some time been A.D. wearing him away; and for months he knew that his life on earth was drawing to an end. His body was laid beside his father's dust in the church of St. Giles, Cripplegate.

The following list contains the names of Milton's chief works, with the dates and places of their composition or publication :—

## POEMS.

Ode on the Nativity, ...	...	Composed in 1629, Cambridge.
L'Allegro, ...	...	" 1632, Horton.
Il Penseroso, ...	...	" " "
Arcades, ...	...	" 1633-34, "
Comus, ...	...	" 1634, "
Lycidas, ...	...	" 1637, "
Italian Sonnets, ...	...	" 1638-39, Florence.
Paradise Lost, ...	...	Published in 1667, London.
Paradise Regained, ...	...	" 1671, "
Samson Agonistes, ...	...	" " "
English Sonnets, ...	...	Various times and places.

## PROSE WORKS.

Of Reformation in England, ...	...	Composed in 1641, London.
Prelatical Episcopacy, ...	...	" " "
Apology for Smectymnuus, ...	...	" 1642, "
Areopagitica, ...	...	" 1644, "
Tractate on Education, ...	...	" " "
The Tenure of Kings, ...	...	" 1649, "
Eikonoklastes, ...	...	" " "
Defensio pro Populo Anglicano, ...	...	" 1651, "
Defensio Secunda, ...	...	" 1654, "
History of England, ...	...	Published in 1669, "
De Doctrinâ Christianâ, ...	...	" 1825,† "

\* Keightley, following Aubrey.

† The Latin manuscript was found in a press in the State-paper Office in 1823, wrapped in an envelope with other papers of Milton. The publication of an English version gave origin to Macaulay's brilliant essay on Milton in the *Edinburgh Review* (August 1825).

*L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* are two companion pictures of life at Horton, where they were written. No ecstasies of joy or sorrow are there depicted, but those moods of mirth and pensiveness which chased each other across the poet's mind, like lights and shadows across a summer landscape.

*Arcades*, a short pastoral masque, which was originally performed at Harefield Park before the Dowager-Countess of Derby, consists of three songs and a speech by the Genius of the wood. Some consider *Arcades* to be only a fragment.

*Comus* is an exquisite masque, founded on an actual occurrence. Its plot is this: A beautiful lady, lost in a wood, is brought under the spells of the magician Comus. Her fate seems sealed, until a kindly spirit appearing in guise of a shepherd to her brothers, who are vainly seeking their sister, gives them a root called haemony, by means of which they set at defiance the power of the enchanter. They dash into the palace, interrupt the progress of a delicious banquet, save their sister, and put to flight Comus and his attendant rabble. The masque was acted at Ludlow Castle by the children of the Earl of Bridgewater, then President of Wales.

*Lycidas* is a sweetly mournful pastoral—a poem “In Memoriam”—written on the death of Milton's college friend King, who was drowned when crossing to Ireland.

*Paradise Lost*.—For seven years Milton laboured at the composition of his greatest work (1658–1664); but for twice six years or more the vast design must have been shaping itself into its wonderful symmetry within the poet's brain.

The subject was not chosen rashly or with haste, and nowhere could be found a theme richer in material for genius to work upon, or more deeply fraught with human interest. Many themes, no doubt, were carefully weighed, only to be rejected. Those stories of ancient Britain which Geoffrey of Monmouth has

collected, early caught the poet's attention and held it long. We can fancy his patriotic heart thrilling proudly and gladly with the thought of rearing upon the unknown graves of Arthur and his knights a great literary monument, at which the British people, gazing, should learn to love the heroes of old. But with growing years and wisdom this idea lost its charms, a change which inspired those lines at the beginning of the Ninth Book :—

“ Since first this subject for heroic song  
Pleased me, long choosing and beginning late ;  
Not sedulous by nature to indite  
Wars, hitherto the only argument  
Heroic deemed ; chief mastery to dissect  
With long and tedious havoc fabled knights,  
In battles feigned ; (the better fortitude  
Of patience and heroic martyrdom  
Unsung ;) or to describe races and games,  
Or tilting furniture, emblazoned shields,  
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds,  
Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights  
At joust and tournament ; then marshalled feast  
Served up in hall with sewers and seneschals ;  
The skill of artifice or office mean !  
Not that which justly gives heroic name  
To person, or to poem.”

The first rough sketches of the poem took the shape of a tragedy or mystery on the “ Fall of Man.” Two such draughts are among the Cambridge manuscripts. But the tragic form was luckily soon abandoned for the epic.

The burning lake—the council of the fallen spirits—the ordaining of the plan of salvation—Satan's voyage to the earth—Eden and its gentle tenants—their pure and happy life—Raphael's visit and discourse upon the war of the angels and the creation of the world—Adam's tale of his own awaking to life, and his first meeting with Eve—the temptation and the fall—Satan's triumphant return to hell, and the sudden fading of exultation under the first stroke of his doom—the intercession of the Son—the mission of Michael to eject the guilty pair—the revelation of



the future to Adam in a vision—and the sad departure of our first parents from their happy garden, now guarded by the sword of God,—such are the salient points in the magnificent plan developed in the twelve books of the *Paradise Lost*.

Interesting glimpses of Milton's life occur in the opening passages of certain books. Most pathetic of these is the sad but beautiful lament of the old man upon his blindness at the beginning of the Third. The poet's love of music, which amounted to an absorbing passion, inspired some of the grandest outbursts of his song.

Hallam says, "The conception of Satan is doubtless the first effort of Milton's genius. Dante could not have ventured to spare so much lustre for a ruined archangel, in an age when nothing less than horns and a tail were the orthodox creed." The magic power of Milton's genius conjures up before us a winged, colossal, fire-eyed shape, whose size we do not know, but are left to guess dimly at by comparison with the hugest objects. His shield is like the moon seen through a telescope; compared with the spear, which helps his painful steps over the burning marl, the mast of a mighty ship dwindles to a wand. We find no definite outline of shape, no distinct measurement of size. Vague dimness and colossal immensity deepen the awfulness of the portrait.

The Adam and Eve of *Paradise Lost* are beautiful creations of poetic fancy, founded on the Bible record. They are true man and woman—not poetic ideals which are never realized in human life.

And what grand conceptions, painted as only true genius can paint, are those dreadful impersonations of Sin and Death that bar the Arch-fiend's way at Hell's nine-fold gates! Dimness is here again a wonderful power in the poet's hand. The King of Terrors is thus described in the Second Book :—

“The other shape,—  
If shape it might be called, that shape had none  
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,  
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,  
For each seemed either : black it stood as night,  
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,  
And shook a dreadful dart ; what seemed his head  
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.”

There are in this fearful image only three points on which the mind can fasten—the colour, black—a dreadful dart—the likeness of a kingly crown : all else is shapeless cloud.

The verse in which this noblest of English poems is written flows on with a deep and solemn current, not broken, as the blank-verse of a dramatist must be, into various alternations of rapid and of pool—quick, brilliant dialogue, and smooth, extended soliloquy or speech—but holding the even tenor of its way amid scenes of surpassing terror and delight, changing its music and its hue as it rolls upon its onward course. Awful though its tone is, when the glare of the fiery gulf falls red upon its stream, or the noise of battling angels shakes its shores, it breathes the sweetest pastoral melody as it glides on through the green and flowery borders of sinless Eden.

*Paradise Regained*, a shorter epic in four books, owed its origin to Ellwood's suggestion at Chalfont. It describes in most expressive verse the temptation and the triumph of our Saviour, and is said to have been preferred by the poet himself to his grander work. Yet it must be reckoned inferior both in style and interest to its great predecessor, although the authorship of so fine a poem would have made the fame of a meaner bard.

*Samson Agonistes* is a dramatic poem, cast in the mould of the old Greek tragedies, for which Milton had a deep, admiring love. It has, like the Greek plays, a chorus taking part in the dialogue. Samson's captivity, and the revenge he took upon his idolatrous oppressors, form the argument of the drama. It

was the last great sun-burst of Milton's splendid poetic genius. Such a theme possessed an irresistible attraction for the mind of an intellectual and imaginative Samson, himself smitten with blindness, and fallen in his evil days amid a revelling and blasphemous crowd, that jibed with ceaseless scorn at the venerable Puritan, whose gray eyes rolled in vain to seek the light of heaven.

*Sonnets.*—Many of Milton's sonnets are very fine. One of the noblest is that burst of righteous indignation evoked by the massacre of the Waldenses. Cromwell and Milton felt alike in this momentous affair: while the Lord Protector threatened the thunder of English cannon, the Latin Secretary launched the thunders of his English verse against the Piedmontese.

The *Areopagitica* is Milton's greatest prose work. Never has the grand theme of a free press been handled with greater eloquence or power. Here we see how true a figure is that fine image by which Macaulay characterizes Milton's prose—"A perfect field of cloth of gold, stiff with gorgeous embroidery."

#### SATAN TO BEELZEBUB.

(PARADISE LOST, BOOK I.)

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"  
Said then the lost archangel, "this the seat  
That we must change for heaven? this mournful gloom  
For that celestial light? Be it so! since he,  
Who now is Sovran, can dispose and bid  
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,  
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme  
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,  
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,  
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,  
Receive thy new possessor! one who brings  
A mind not to be changed by place or time.  
The mind is its own place, and in itself  
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.  
What matter where, if I be still the same,  
And what I should be,—all but less than he  
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least  
We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built  
Here for his envy; will not drive us hence:  
Here we may reign secure; and in my choice

To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell :  
 Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.  
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,  
 The associates and copartners of our loss,  
 Lie thus astonished on the oblivious pool,  
 And call them not to share with us their part  
 In this unhappy mansion ; or once more,  
 With rallied arms, to try what may be yet  
 Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell ? ”

## THE ANGELS.

(PARADISE LOST, BOOK III.)

No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all  
 The multitude of angels, with a shout  
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet  
 As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heaven rung  
 With jubilee, and loud hosannas filled  
 The eternal regions. Lowly reverent  
 Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground,  
 With solemn adoration, down they cast  
 Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold—  
 Immortal amarant, a flower which once  
 In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,  
 Began to bloom ; but soon for man's offence  
 To Heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows.  
 And flowers aloft, shading the fount of life,  
 And where the river of bliss, through midst of Heaven,  
 Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream :  
 With these, that never fade, the spirits elect  
 Bind their resplendent locks inwreathed with beams ;  
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright  
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,  
 Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.  
 Then, crowned again, their golden harps they took—  
 Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side  
 Like quivers hung ; and, with preamble sweet  
 Of charming symphony, they introduce  
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high :  
 No voice exempt—no voice but well could join  
 Melodious part ; such concord is in Heaven.

## LYCIDAS.

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,  
 For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,  
 Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor ;  
 So sinks the day-star in the ocean-bed,  
 And yet anon repairs his drooping head,  
 And tricks his beams, and, with new-spangled ore,  
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky ;  
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,

Through the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves.  
 Where other groves, and other streams along,  
 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,  
 And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,  
 In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.  
 There entertain him all the saints above,  
 In solemn troops, and sweet societies,  
 That sing, and singing in their glory move,  
 And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.  
 Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;  
 Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,  
 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good  
 To all that wander in that perilous flood.

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## CHAPTER VI.

## OTHER WRITERS OF THE FOURTH ERA.

SIR WILLIAM D'AVENANT, born in 1606 at Oxford, where his father kept a tavern, became laureate on the death of Ben Jonson. He was a keen Royalist, and in the Civil War suffered many changes of fortune. While an exile in France he wrote part of the tedious heroic poem *Gondibert*, which is the chief work now associated with his name. During the Commonwealth, while on board a ship bound for Virginia, he was arrested by the sailors of the Parliament, and confined at Cowes and in the Tower. Milton is thought to have aided in obtaining his release; and D'Avenant, we are told, repaid the kindness when the Restoration changed the fortunes of the poets. Resuming his old occupation, the management of a theatre, D'Avenant spent his last years in peace, and died in 1668.

EDMUND WALLER, born in 1606, is one of the brilliant, courtly poets who flourished under the rule of our two Kings Charles. A rich and well-born youth, he was a member of Parliament at sixteen. At first he took the popular side, but in the Civil War, being detected in a Royalist plot, he suffered imprisonment and fine. After a sojourn in France

he came home to celebrate in verse the glory of Cromwell; and not long afterwards, in a poem of inferior merit, to welcome the returning Stuart king. He then sat for Hastings, for various other places in successive Parliaments, and at nearly eighty years of age for a Cornish borough. He died and was buried in 1687 at Beaconsfield, where, little more than a century later, the body of the great Edmund Burke was laid in the grave. Waller's verses are smooth, elegant, and polished; but they are little more. His speeches in Parliament were, in general, excellent and telling.

SIR JOHN DENHAM, the author of *Cooper's Hill*, was born in 1615 at Dublin, the son of the Chief-Justice of the King's Bench in Ireland. At Oxford he became acquainted with the most brilliant of the young Cavaliers, and with these he afterwards gambled away the fortune left him by his father. *Cooper's Hill* is a descriptive poem, varied by the thoughts suggested by such striking objects in the landscape as the Thames, Windsor Forest, and the flats of Runnymede. It is a good specimen of local poetry. Like all the Royalist party, he rose in fortune and favour at the Restoration, becoming then a surveyor of royal buildings and a Knight of the Bath. He died in 1669. A poor tragedy, the *Sophy*, founded on incidents in Turkish life, was also written by him.

RICHARD LOVELACE, born in 1618, was the most unhappy of the Cavalier poets. For his gallant struggles in the cause of his king, he suffered imprisonment, during which he collected and published his *Odes and Songs*. The marriage of his sweetheart with another—she thought that he had died of his wounds in France—broke his hopes and his heart; and through the years of the Commonwealth he continued to sink, until in 1658 he died, a ragged and consumptive beggar, in an alley near Shoe Lane. His poetry resembles Herrick's, but with less sparkle and more conceits.

ABRAHAM COWLEY, born in London in 1618, was



the son of a stationer in Cheapside. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. Like Pope, he wrote poems in early boyhood, and published a volume when only fifteen. His Royalist principles caused him to be expelled from Cambridge; and after some time at Oxford he went with Queen Henrietta to France, where he lived for ten years. Disappointed after the Restoration in his hopes of preferment, he retired to Chertsey, by the Thames, where his old timbered house is still pointed out. There he lived, in studious quiet but not content, for seven years, when, in 1667, a neglected cold killed him after a fortnight's illness. He wrote *Miscellanies*, the *Mistress* or *Love Verses*, *Pindaric Odes*, and the *Davideis*, a heroic poem upon David. His light, sparkling renderings of Horace and Anacreon are among his happiest efforts. In many of his works there is a constant and uneasy straining after effect. His prose is simple, pure, and animated. No poet of his day was more popular than Cowley, who is now but little read.

WILLIAM CHAMBERLAYNE of Shaftesbury, in Dorset, born in 1619, wrote two long poems, which Campbell rescued from obscurity. They are *Love's Victory*, a tragi-comedy; and *Pharonnida*, a heroic poem. The latter especially contains some fine and varied scenes. Chamberlayne died in 1689. A country doctor practising at Shaftesbury, he associated little with the great men of his day.

HENRY VAUGHAN, called the "Silurist," born in Brecknockshire in 1622, was first a lawyer and then a physician. His best work is to be found in his *Sacred Poems*, some of which rank among the finest religious poetry in the language. But, with much deep feeling, they have the faults of the Metaphysical school, many of them in an exaggerated form. He died in 1695.

CHARLES COTTON, the witty poet-friend of Walton, was a Staffordshire man, born there in 1630. His

father, Sir George, left him the encumbered estate of Ashbourne. Cotton was always in money difficulties; but his light, easy nature enabled him to pass through life unsoured. The Dove, a noted trout-stream of his native shire, was the great resort of Cotton and his old friend Izaak, to whom many of his poems were addressed. His *Virgil Travestied* was his most important work, but he is at his best in the fishing songs contained in the *Compleat Angler*, of which he wrote the second part. The poet died in 1687.

#### PROSE WRITERS.

JOHN GAUDEN was born in 1605 at Mayland, in Essex, and was educated at St. John's, Cambridge. He is considered, upon satisfactory evidence, to have written the celebrated work *Eikon Basiliké*,\* or *The Portraiture of His Most Sacred Majesty* [Charles the First] *in his Solitude and Sufferings*, which came out on January 31, 1649, the day after the king's death. Many have thought that Charles wrote the book himself: it was published under the royal name. But Gauden's complaining letters to Clarendon, coupled with other evidence, seem to prove that this Royalist clergyman was the author of the *Eikon*. Forty-seven editions were sold in one year. Milton, in his *Eikonoklastes* (Image-breaker), smote the *Eikon* with his weighty pen; but it bravely stood the blow. Gauden, who was made, under Charles the Second, Bishop of Exeter, and afterwards Bishop of Worcester, died in 1662.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE, born in London in 1605, was a physician in practice at Norwich. His works—*Religio Medici*, or the Religion of a Physician (1642), *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, or Vulgar Errors (1646), and *Hydriotaphia*, a treatise on the Sepulchral Urns of Norfolk (1658)—display perhaps the most extreme specimens our literature affords of that style, loaded with heavy Latin words, but eloquent and

\* The Royal Image.

imaginative to the highest degree, which was characteristic of the century. Coleridge, with whom Browne was a favourite author, praises the enthusiasm and entireness with which the eccentric doctor handles every subject he takes up. Browne died in 1682.

RALPH CUDWORTH, born in 1617, was Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge. He published in 1678 a great work, entitled *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, in which he maintains that there is an Almighty, All-wise God—that there is an everlasting distinction between justice and injustice, and that the human will is free. This work was intended to combat widespread atheistic doctrines. A treatise on *Eternal and Immutable Morality*, also from Cudworth's pen, appeared after his death; and many of his manuscript works are preserved in the British Museum. He died in 1688.

JOHN EVELYN, born in 1620 to the enjoyment of a good fortune, spent his abundant leisure in popularizing science. The *Sylva*, which contains an account of forest trees and their uses, proved the means of stirring up proprietors to plant oak trees largely over the country for use in shipbuilding. *Terra*, a work on agriculture, appeared in 1675. But the most interesting of Evelyn's works is his *Diary*, which presents us with a clear view of English life, especially under Charles the Second, and a description of all great public events in which the writer had any interest. The *Diary* was not published till 1818. Evelyn's snug house and beautiful gardens at Deptford were shamefully abused by his imperial tenant, the Czar Peter, who used often to amuse himself by riding on a wheelbarrow through a great holly hedge. Evelyn died in 1706.

ANDREW MARVELL, Milton's friend, wrote both poetry and prose. He was born in Yorkshire on 31st March 1621. Upon finishing his education at Cambridge he travelled, and afterwards acted as secretary to the embassy at Constantinople. In 1657 he became

assistant to Milton, the Latin Secretary. As member for Hull, he is said to have refused a bribe of £1,000 offered by Charles the Second. His treatise on *Popery and Arbitrary Government in England* was perhaps the greatest effort of his pen. His poems are remarkable for their classic grace and melody. In 1678 he died, it was rumoured, by poison, but really of a tertian ague.

ALGERNON SIDNEY, son of the Earl of Leicester, was born in 1622. He was a colonel of cavalry in the Parliamentary army during the Civil War; but was no friend to Cromwell, whose assumption of power he condemned. After the Restoration he remained on the Continent for seventeen years; and then, having received a pardon from the king, he returned to see his aged father. Placing himself in opposition to the court, he was beheaded in 1682 on a charge of conspiracy against the government. A folio of 462 pages, entitled *Discourses on Government*, is the only important work of Sidney that we possess. It was written in opposition to the doctrine of divine right. The establishment of a republic in England was Sidney's life-long dream.

ROBERT BOYLE, son of the Earl of Cork, was born at Lismore in 1627. Distinguished for his researches in chemistry and natural philosophy, he was one of the original members of the Royal Society. Air and the air-pump were his favourite subjects. His numerous works consist of philosophical treatises, and several works on religious topics. His *Occasional Reflections on Several Subjects*, published in 1665, gave origin to Swift's well-known caricature, *Meditation on a Broomstick*. Boyle died in 1691.

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE, famous as the negotiator of the Triple Alliance, and as that English envoy at the Hague who arranged the marriage between William of Orange and the Princess Mary of England, was born in London in 1628. His scheme of a Council of Thirty, to bring the perplexed government of Charles the Second into order, proved a failure. During the intervals of

public life Temple wrote many clear and graceful *Essays* on various subjects, among which we may note those on the *Netherlands*, *Government*, and *Learning*. Gardening, too, his favourite recreation, employed his pen. His last days were spent at Moor Park, in Surrey, where young Jonathan Swift was for a time his secretary. He died in 1699.

JOHN RAY, a blacksmith's son, born in 1627 at Black Notley, in Essex, was a very celebrated naturalist. His *General History of Plants* and his popular work on the *Wisdom of God in the Works of Creation* are his chief productions. Birds, fishes, insects, and quadrupeds all attracted the attention of Ray; but botany was his favourite study. He died in 1705.

JOHN TILLOTSON, who became Archbishop of Canterbury after the Revolution, was the son of a Puritan clothier at Sowerby, near Halifax, where he was born in 1630. His associations at Cambridge, and certain books he read, gradually led to a change of views; and he entered the Church of England after 1662. He first became celebrated as a preacher at St. Lawrence's, in the Jewry. Having held the primacy for only three years, he died in 1694. His *Sermons*, sold after his death for nearly £3,000, are his only literary remains. They are strong and sensible, but often without much literary grace.

ISAAC BARROW, the predecessor of Newton in his mathematical professorship at Cambridge, was born in London in 1630. His father was a linen-draper. Barrow was a man of versatile talent. Anatomy, chemistry, mathematics, astronomy, Greek, optics, and theology—all engaged his attention at various times; and in all he did well. His literary works are chiefly mathematical and theological. The former are in Latin; the latter, consisting of sermons and polemical treatises, were written with much care, and are remarkable for easy fertility of thought. Barrow died of fever in 1677, having attained the position of Master of Trinity, and Vice-Chancellor of his University.

SAMUEL PEPYS, son of a London tailor, rose, by the help of his cousin Montagu, to be Secretary to the Admiralty under Charles the Second and James the Second. He is worth remembrance as the writer of a most amusing *Diary*, originally kept in shorthand, which depicts the life of the time even to the minutest details of dinners, lace, and coat-buttons. The vanities and faults of the writer himself are displayed with comical unconcern. The book is the most undress record in our literature, but the man who was so occupied with trifles was on his professional side a bold and vigorous naval reformer. He died in 1703.

ROBERT SOUTH, reputed to have been the wittiest of the old English divines, was the son of a London merchant, and was born in 1634 at Hackney. Educated at Oxford, he was chosen Public Orator in 1660. Besides being chaplain to Lord Chancellor Clarendon and Rector of Islip, in Oxfordshire, he held some other valuable livings. South's wit, unhappily, was often mixed with venom. Extreme in his opinions, he held all Nonconformists in abhorrence. But his love of royalty was fully as strong as his attachment to the National Church. No clergyman of his day exceeded him in the fervour of those sermons in which he maintained the doctrines—so delightful to the Stuarts—of passive obedience and divine right. South died in 1716. In spite of his intolerance as a public preacher, he bore the private reputation of a good and charitable man.



## FIFTH ERA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

FROM THE DEATH OF MILTON IN 1674 A.D. TO THE  
FIRST PUBLICATION OF THE "TATLER"  
IN 1709 A.D.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE COURT OF CHARLES THE SECOND.

It is not our purpose to present a minute picture of the court life, rotten to the core, which blighted English morals and English literature during the reign of the second Charles. But to preserve the completeness of our plan this subject must be touched upon; for there are many of our English writers whose spirit cannot be fully understood unless we know at least a little of the moral air they breathed, and the fountains from which they drank their inspiration. Mephitic air and poisoned streams they truly were from which the courtly authors of the Restoration Era drew the sustenance and productive power of their minds.

The Puritans, when in the ascendant, had with an iron hand crushed down many amusements, the desire of which is a natural appetite of man, and had thus created a hunger and a longing for the forbidden things, which became an unappeasable frenzy when the Restoration brought a change. The nation then plunged madly into the opposite extreme. And when we remember that from France with the restored



Joseph Addison.

*From the portrait by Kneller.*



king there came a troop of new fashions and amusements, which were but the old vices of human nature tricked out in modern attire, we shall see what kind of food the royal court provided for the people.

An utter absence of shame marked the mode of life in this age. It was not that gambling as high, drinking as deep, adulteries as vile, had not been common in other reigns. What stamps the reign of Charles the Second with a deeper brand of infamy is the fact that there was no attempt to throw even the thinnest veil over the evil that was rampant everywhere. The blush of innocence seemed almost forgotten in the court circles of England. Men and women were alike depraved.

On Sunday, February 1, 1685—the night before Charles was seized with his mortal illness—the great gallery of Whitehall presented a scene of “inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming and all dissoluteness,” which may be taken as a specimen of what had been witnessed there a thousand times before during his disgraceful reign. The king sat talking with three of his mistresses. A French page, on whom the royal hand delighted to shower presents of ponies, guineas, and fine clothes, sang love-songs to the group. At a large table close by, where two thousand yellow guineas were heaped into a great bank, sat twenty of the profligate courtiers playing basset, then the fashionable game at cards. This went on, as it had been going on for five-and-twenty years, in the full gaze of all who chose to come and see. Little wonder that the poison should spread right and left, sinking down to the lowest classes of the people; and still less wonder that such undisguised licentiousness should be faithfully reflected in the plays and the books, which were written in the hope of extracting smiles and gold from the profligates and gamblers who surrounded the throne.

Whitehall, as was natural, gave the tone to all English society; and books are but the reflection of

what society thinks and does. So the vices of Whitehall were mirrored in many of the chief writings of the time. All the comedies, and much of the poetry, written from the Restoration to the close of the century, and later too, are vicious in tone. It took many a long year to root out the poisonous weeds that, sown in this age, spread their fibres through the best soils of English poetry.

When the theatres were reopened at the Restoration, a new splendour was thrown around their performances. The female characters began to be personated by women. Rich dresses, beautifully painted scenes, and fine decorations added to the attractions of the drama a dazzling effect unknown in earlier times. Crowds flocked nightly to the play; and how were they entertained? Almost all duties to God and to man were held up to public mockery. Virtue in every form, especially truth and modesty, came in for the largest share of the comedian's jeering; the strongest sympathies of the audience were stirred, and their loudest applause drawn forth, by the triumph of the profligate, and the ridicule cast upon the victims of his arts.

The plays of Dryden are nearly all tainted with the poison of the social atmosphere of the time; but those of Wycherley are perhaps the most notorious specimens of that form of literature that have lived to the present day. The satires, songs, and novels of the period also bear the brand and scars of vice, and flaunt them openly in the eyes of all. The writers of such things penned them without compunction, and there were few who thought it shame to *read* of vicious deeds which sun and moon saw *done* by night and day without a blush. Yet there are things more dangerous than this brazen effrontery, this shameless show of iniquity. Men grow disgusted and surfeited with the grossness of paraded sin. Edmund Burke was a great and wise man; but he said a very foolish thing when, at the close of his indignant outburst in

memory of the fallen Queen of France, he told the world that "vice itself loses half its evil by losing all its grossness." Never was a greater falsehood spoken. The vice which is draped in the garb of virtue, or has the varnish of an outward refinement laid over its leprosy, is tenfold more destructive than the wickedness which wears no veil to hide its front.

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## CHAPTER II.

SAMUEL BUTLER.

Born 1612 A.D. . . . . Died 1680 A.D.

AFTER the Restoration of King Charles the Second had thrown the Puritans into the shade, a man of almost fifty years, who had seen the bloody drama of the Revolution played out, and had been thrown by the changes of those troubled years into close contact with both Cavaliers and Roundheads, wrote a poem which cast even deeper ridicule upon the men of the steeple-hat and the sad-coloured dress than all the studied mockeries of a plumed and ringleted court could do. The man was Samuel Butler; the poem was *Hudibras*. What Shakespeare is among English dramatists, Milton among English epic poets, Bunyan among English allegorists, Butler is among the writers of English burlesque—prince and paramount.

He sprang from a lowly stock. His father farmed a few acres in the parish of Strensham, in Worcestershire; and there the poet came to life in 1612. His schooling he got in Worcester; but the want of money prevented him from enjoying the benefit of a college education, although he is thought to have resided for some time at Cambridge, hovering round the halls of learning without being able to find an entrance there.

His abilities, however, gained him a few friends. He spent some time at Earls-Croome, in his native



shire, acting as clerk to Justice Jeffreys; and his leisure hours, while he held this humble post, were devoted not alone to study, but also to the enjoyments of music and painting. Not long ago some sorry daubs, patching the broken windows of a house at Earls-Croome, were shown as the productions of the poet's pencil.

It was a happy day for Butler which transferred him to the mansion of the Countess of Kent. We do not know in what capacity he served this rich and noble lady; but there he found—what, no doubt, deeply gladdened the heart of the rustic scholar—the free use of a fine library, and the conversation of a learned man, Selden, who then managed the affairs of that household. Here he lived—how long we cannot say—revelling in books of all kinds, and often repaying by literary help the kindness of the scholarly steward.

Butler's life, as it has come down to us, is full of gaps. Knocked about from one employment to another, he acquired by his very misfortunes that rare and varied knowledge of human life which he displays so admirably in *Hudibras*. The next scene in which he appears is the grave household of Sir Samuel Luke, a strict Puritan of Bedfordshire, who held a county office—that of scout-master—under Cromwell. The atmosphere which Butler here breathed must have been somewhat uncongenial; yet it was his residence among the Puritans that prepared him for his famous work, and sharpened his pen. Little did the Round-head knight and his quiet household think that the poor tutor, whose irrepressible wit no doubt often scandalized the decorum of the dining-hall, was, like a traitor in the camp, taking silent notes.

Another gap, and Butler reappears as secretary to the Earl of Carbery, the President of Wales, who conferred on him the stewardship of Ludlow Castle. It was then after the Restoration, and brighter days seemed to be dawning for the Royalist wit. So good

were his prospects that, although there must have been gray hairs under the huge bush of false curls which it was then the fashion to wear, he ventured to marry, as he thought, a fortune. But ill-luck still pursued him ; his wife's money vanished through the failure of the securities, and Butler found himself as poor as ever. Then it was that he first came before the public as an author. The first part 1663 of *Hudibras* was published, and sprang at once A.D. into fame. The moment was most propitious, for the degraded Puritans afforded a favourite mark for the shafts of courtly ridicule. The loud laugh of the Cavalier party rang everywhere, as they read verses which chimed in with their own feelings. The Merry Monarch was so tickled with the debates between the Presbyterian justice and the Independent clerk that he often quoted witty couplets from the book. Yet fame did not mend the fortunes of poor Butler. He got promises from his noble friends, but he got little more ; and in 1680 he died obscurely in Rose Street, Covent Garden, having suffered deeply from the bitter pangs of that hope deferred which maketh the heart sick.

*Hudibras* is justly considered the best burlesque poem in the English language. For drollery and wit it cannot be surpassed. Written in the short tetrameter line, to which Scott has given so martial a ring, its queer couplets are readily understood and easily remembered—none the less for the extraordinary rhymes which now and then startle us into a laugh. What can we expect but broad satiric fun in a poem in which we find a canto beginning thus :—

“ There was an ancient sage philosopher,  
That had read Alexander Ross over.”

The adventures of Don Quixote no doubt suggested the idea of this work. Sir Hudibras, a Presbyterian knight, and his clerk, Squire Ralpho, sally forth to seek adventures and redress grievances, much as did

the chivalrous knight of La Mancha and his trusty Sancho Panza. Nine cantos are filled with the squabbles, loves, and woes of master and man, whose Puritan manners and opinions are represented in a most ludicrous light.

#### THE LEARNING OF HUDIBRAS.

He was in logic a great critic,  
 Profoundly skilled in analytic ;  
 He could distinguish, and divide  
 A hair 'twixt south and south-west side ;  
 On either which he would dispute,  
 Confute, change hands, and still confute ;  
 He'd undertake to prove by force  
 Of argument a man's no horse ;  
 He'd prove a buzzard is no fowl,  
 And that a lord may be an owl—  
 A calf, an alderman—a goose, a justice—  
 And rooks, committee-men and trustees.  
 He'd run in debt by disputation,  
 And pay with ratiocination :  
 All this by syllogism, true  
 In mood and figure, he would do.  
 For rhetoric, he could not ope  
 His mouth but out there flew a trope ;  
 And when he happened to break off  
 I' th' middle of his speech, or cough,  
 H' had hard words, ready to show why,  
 And tell what rules he did it by :  
 Else, when with greatest art he spoke,  
 You'd think he talked like other folk ;  
 For all a rhetorician's rules  
 Teach nothing but to name his tools.  
 But, when he pleased to shew't, his speech  
 In loftiness of sound was rich ;  
 A Babylonish dialect,  
 Which learned pedants much affect :  
 It was a party-coloured dress  
 Of patched and piebald languages ;  
 'Twas English cut on Greek and Latin,  
 Like fustian heretofore on satin.  
 It had an odd, promiscuous tone,  
 As if he had talked three parts in one ;  
 Which made some think, when he did gabble,  
 Th' had heard three labourers of Babel,  
 Or Cerberus himself pronounce  
 A leash of languages at once.

## CHAPTER III.

JOHN BUNYAN.

Born 1628 A.D. . . . . Died 1688 A.D.

A BOOK which little children love to read may safely be pronounced a good book. In our English literature there are two works that have been tried for many score of years by this unfailing test, and have never been found wanting. These are *The Pilgrim's Progress* of Bunyan and the *Robinson Crusoe* of Defoe. For many generations childish heads have been bent over their pages ; nor can we imagine a time when children shall cease to care about the perilous travels of Christian, or shall not grow half-afraid, yet filled with a strange delight, when they read of Friday's footstep in the sand.

That famous Puritan tinker who wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress* was born in the village of Elstow, a mile from Bedford, in the year 1628. He was emphatically a man of the people. Few have passed through so fierce an ordeal of mental struggle and religious horror. He tells us in his *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, a sort of religious autobiography, that even at the age of nine or ten, fearful dreams and thoughts of the burning lake and the devils chained down to wait for the great Judgment haunted him at intervals. Then, when the pain lulled, he plunged, as he thought, into sin, though his errors seem to have been innocent enough. While yet a boy he was drafted into the army, and served in the garrison at Newport-Pagnell for two and a half years under the Puritan leader, Sir Samuel Luke. He tells us of a narrow escape he had during the Civil War. At a certain siege he was selected as sentinel for a certain post, and was on the point of going out to mount guard, when another soldier asked leave to go instead of him. Bunyan agreed ; and the poor fellow who took his

place was shot dead with a bullet through the brain. Yet in spite of this, and two escapes from drowning, he grew, according to his own confession, more careless still.

At the age of twenty he married a young woman of his own rank in life. They had, he tells us, "neither dish nor spoon betwixt them;" but she brought to his humble home two religious books, and she herself had found the pearl of great price. She lent to her boy-husband the books, the legacy of her dying father, and brought him with her to church. There one Sunday he heard a sermon on the duties of that day, and the sin of breaking in on its holy calm, which flashed a new light into his soul. With a heavy heart he went home; and when, as usual, he went out in the afternoon on the village green to play cat with his roistering associates, and in the full flush of the game had struck the piece of wood one blow away from the hole, suddenly, as in old times a hand wrote on the wall of the Chaldean palace, these words darted into his mind, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" Although he got a momentary shock, yet Bunyan still remained unimpressed until, about a month later, he was cursing a neighbour so violently as to draw a severe rebuke from the woman of the house, who was herself of the worst character. Such a check from such lips silenced the blasphemer, who, standing with down-hung head, wished, as he touchingly says, "that he was a little child again, that his father might learn him to speak without this wicked way of swearing." He then began to read the Bible and to amend his life—repenting, among other things, of his dancing, his ale-quaffing, and his bell-ringing. The odd conjunction of vices is typical of his morbid and ultra-sensitive state of mind. However, the incident which made the deepest impression on Bunyan's soul, and which must certainly be looked on as the turning-point in his life, was his happening to over-







HENRY FIELDING.

*From the bust by Margaret Thomas.*

hear a conversation about the new birth among three or four poor women sitting at a door in Bedford. So thankfully did they speak of what God, through Jesus Christ, had done for their souls, and so lovingly did they quote the Bible words, that Bunyan went away feeling as he had never felt before, and unable to think of anything but the conversation he had heard.

Thus, knot after knot, the bonds of sin were cut from his soul, and John Bunyan became a new man. About the year 1655 he commenced to preach in the villages of Bedfordshire, having already been for two years a member of a Baptist congregation.

With slight interruption he continued this good work until the Restoration, when he was arrested as a holder of conventicles, which were then declared unlawful. By Justice Wingate he was committed to Bedford Jail, where, with perhaps a 1660 brief interval of freedom in 1666, he remained A.D. for twelve years. Within a chamber of the old Swan Inn that faithful wife pleaded before the judges and the gentlemen of the shire for her prisoned husband. "Will your husband leave preaching?" said Judge Twisden. "My lord," said the noble woman, "he dares not leave preaching so long as he can speak." And so Bunyan lay in jail, his wife and children weaving laces, upon which he fixed tags, to get them daily bread. Happily for us, his jailer was a kind-hearted man, disposed to deal as gently as he could with his ward. Bunyan had two books with him—the Bible and *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, which he studied constantly and deeply. He had also pen and ink, with liberty to use them. He was twice imprisoned—from 1660 to 1672, when he was released by the Declaration of Indulgence, and again in 1675. During this latter short period he wrote the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. His 1675 last confinement is memorable for his ordina- A.D. tion in the room of his old minister and friend, Mr. Gifford. Then, released by the influence of Dr. Thomas Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln, he held his

services in a barn at Bedford, which was purchased for £50, and fitted up as a chapel. There he laboured with voice and pen for thirteen years, often visiting London, where the churches were always crowded to the doors when he preached. A journey under heavy

rain from Reading to London brought on a  
1688 fever, of which he died in his sixty-first year.

A.D. A hundred years ago, a green, decaying grave-stone, on which was inscribed in faint lettering, "Here lies John Bunyan," was pointed out in the cemetery at Bunhill Fields. The stone was replaced a few years ago by a handsome memorial to the Immortal Dreamer.

Macaulay's opinion of Bunyan is worth remembrance. In a review of Southey's edition, he says that "Bunyan is as decidedly the first of allegorists as Demosthenes is the first of orators, or Shakespeare the first of dramatists." The adventures of Christian need no description. They are told in plain, unvarnished English, which pretends to no studied excellence, and yet has the power and exquisiteness of simplicity. Bunyan, a common working-man, had no thought of style as he wrote. All he desired was to place vividly before his readers certain pictures, which he himself saw almost as clearly as if he had been Christian trudging on a real highway, instead of Bunyan writing within dark prison walls. And this he has done with such marvellous skill that we too feel the green grass of the Delectable Mountains beneath our feet, and shudder as the awful darkness of the Valley of the Shadow of Death closes around us. First published in 1678, one hundred thousand copies were sold during the subsequent ten years of Bunyan's life. It has since been printed in countless thousands, and has been translated into all the chief tongues of earth.

The *Holy War*, which describes the siege and capture of the city of Mansoul by Diabolus, is another allegory from the pen of Bunyan, also written within his cell at Bedford.

## THE VALLEY OF HUMILIATION.

(FROM "THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.")

But we will come again to this Valley of Humiliation. It is the best and most fruitful piece of ground in all these parts. It is fat ground, and, as you see, consisteth much in meadows; and if a man was to come here in summer-time, as we do now, if he knew not anything before thereof, and if he also delighted himself in the sight of his eyes, he might see that which would be delightful to him. Behold how green this valley is; also how beautiful with lilies. (Song ii. 1.) I have known many labouring men that have got good estates in this Valley of Humiliation (for "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble," James iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5); for indeed it is a very fruitful soil, and doth bring forth by handfuls. Some also have wished that the next way to their Father's house were here, that they might be troubled no more with either hills or mountains to go over: but the way is the way, and there is an end.

Now, as they were going along and talking, they espied a boy feeding his father's sheep. The boy was in very mean clothes, but of a fresh and well-favoured countenance; and as he sat by himself, he sung. Hark, said Mr. Great-heart, to what the shepherd's boy saith; so they hearkened, and he said,—

He that is down needs fear no fall;  
He that is low, no pride;  
He that is humble ever shall  
Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,  
Little be it or much;  
And, Lord, contentment still I crave,  
Because thou savest such.

Fullness to such a burden is,  
That go on pilgrimage;  
Here little, and hereafter bliss,  
Is best from age to age.

Then said their guide, Do you hear him? I will dare to say this boy lives a merrier life, and wears more of that herb called heart's-ease in his bosom, than he that is clad in silk and velvet. But we will proceed in our discourse.

In this valley our Lord formerly had his country-house; he loved much to be here. He loved also to walk these meadows, for he found the air was pleasant. Besides, here a man shall be free from the noise, and from the hurryings of this life. All states are full of noise and confusion, only the Valley of Humiliation is that empty and solitary place. Here a man shall not be so let and hindered in his contemplation as in other places he is apt to be. This is a valley that nobody walks in but those that love a pilgrim's life. And though Christian had the hard hap to meet here with Apollyon, and to enter with him into a brisk encounter, yet I must tell you, that in former times men have met with angels here, have found pearls here, and have in this place found the words of life. (Hos. xii. 4, 5.)

## CHAPTER IV.

RICHARD BAXTER.

Born 1615 A.D. . . . . Died 1691 A.D.

No name stands higher in the history of our theological literature than that of Richard Baxter, the Puritan divine. Born in 1615 at Rowton, a village in Shropshire, he passed, after some desultory work at school, and a course of private theological study, into the ministry of the Church of England. During the nine months after his ordination, which took place when he was twenty-three, he held the mastership of the Free Grammar School at Dudley. Then, having acted as curate of Bridgenorth for a while, he settled  
 1640 down in 1640 in the parish of Kidderminster,  
 A.D. where his untiring devotion and the deep earnestness of his sermons soon won for him a considerable name. Already some of those oaths which worked such fatal mischief in the Church at that day had crossed the path of Baxter; but he had passed them by unheeded. So long as his conscience told him that he was rightly doing his Christian work, he troubled himself little to obey every letter of the ritual laid down for his observance.

The Civil War then broke out; and although he was the friend of monarchy, his religious leanings caused him to side with the Parliament. He became a chaplain in the Roundhead army, followed his regiment through many scenes of blood, and yet always preserved the character of a peacemaker. Standing midway between two extremes of conflicting opinion, he incurred, as such good men have often incurred, the suspicion of both parties. While he loved royalty, he disliked the conduct of the king; but, for all his dislike, it was with a heart full of sorrow that he beheld the discrowned head of Charles degraded to a bloody death. And when the throne lay overturned

in the tempest of revolution, the pastor of Kidderminster, standing face to face with the great Oliver himself, dared, with a noble courage, to lift his voice in defence of that ancient monarchy which has ever been the glory of the land. Meek and moderate though he was, and much as he loved peace, he was too honest a man to bate one jot of the principles which he held dearer than life or fame.

Soon after the Restoration, Clarendon tried to tempt him with an offer of the bishopric of Hereford; but he steadily refused this and other golden baits. Baxter was a Trimmer in religion as in politics; he loved the name, for he held it to be synonymous with "peacemaker." Believing that Episcopacy was in many respects a good and lawful system, he yet sided with the Presbyterians in denying the absolute need of ordination by a bishop. And he further agreed with the Presbyterians in adopting the Bible as the sole guide of man in faith and conduct. Accordingly, when the Act of Uniformity was passed in 1662, this good man had no resource but to leave the bosom of the national Church. Taking shelter at 1662 Acton, in Middlesex, he spent several years in A.D. active literary work, suffering heavy penalties more than once for his strict adherence to the simple worship which he believed to be right and true in the sight of God. We cannot follow him through the trials of those troubled years. After the Indulgence of 1672 his life was chiefly spent in London, where he preached and wrote with incessant industry. There were many days and weeks when his pulpit was silent, for the Nonconformists, among whom he was a leader, were under the ban of the land. But his pen was always busy; and at length it goaded his enemies into open war.

A passage in his *Commentary on the New Testament*, complaining bitterly of the sufferings inflicted on the Dissenters, was held to be sufficient ground for a charge of sedition against the veteran minister, now



worn down by age and illness. The trial came on at Guildhall, before that judge who a little later stained the pure robe of English justice in the Bloody Assizes.

All attempts on the part of Baxter and his  
1685 lawyers to obtain a hearing were roared down  
A.D. by the brutal Jeffreys. "Richard! Richard! dost thou think we'll hear thee poison the court? Richard, thou art an old fellow, an old knave. Thou hast written books enough to load a cart. Hadst thou been whipt out of thy writing trade forty years ago, it had been happy." From such a judge and a servile jury there was no escape. Pronounced "Guilty" after a moment's conference, the old man was sent to jail, because he could not pay the heavy fine imposed upon him; and he lay in the King's Bench prison for nearly eighteen months. Soon after his release, which was obtained by the kindness of Lord Powis, he had the joy of seeing the great second Revolution usher in a brighter day of civil and religious freedom. Then, full of years and crowned with their good works, he descended into an honoured grave, December 8, 1691.

His published writings, which were nearly all upon divinity, reached at least to the enormous number of one hundred and sixty-eight. In the quiet of his study at Kidderminster he composed those two works of great practical power by which he is best known, *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, and *A Call to the Unconverted*. We have also *A Narrative of his Own Life and Times*, to which Johnson and Coleridge agree in awarding the highest praise. The wonder of Baxter's laborious life becomes yet greater when we remember that he had to struggle through nearly all his years with a feeble frame. How he spent his vacation hours, when heavy sickness compelled him to snatch a little rest, may be judged from the following passage:—

#### BAXTER REGRETS HIS HASTE IN WRITING.

Concerning almost all my writings, I must confess that my own judgment is, that fewer, well studied and polished, had been better;

but the reader, who can safely censure the books, is not fit to censure the author, unless he had been upon the place, and acquainted with all the occasions and circumstances. Indeed, for the *Saints' Rest*, I had four months' vacancy to write it, but in the midst of continual languishing and medicine; but, for the rest, I wrote them in the crowd of all my other employments, which would allow me no great leisure for polishing and exactness, or any ornament; so that I scarce ever wrote one sheet twice over, nor stayed to make any blots or interlinings, but was fain to let it go as it was first conceived: and when my own desire was rather to stay upon one thing long than run over many, some sudden occasions or other extorted almost all my writings from me; and the apprehensions of present usefulness or necessity prevailed against all other motives; so that the divines which were at hand with me still put me on, and approved of what I did, because they were moved by present necessities as well as I; but those that were far off, and felt not those nearer motives, did rather wish that I had taken the other way, and published a few elaborate writings; and I am ready myself to be of their mind, when I forget the case that I then stood in, and have lost the sense of former motives.

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## CHAPTER V.

JOHN DRYDEN.

Born 1631 A.D. . . . . Died 1700 A.D.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON, borrowing a classic metaphor which describes what Augustus did for Rome, says in reference to English poetry, that Dryden found it brick and left it marble. Let it not be forgotten that Johnson, in his *Lives of the Poets*, has ignored Shakespeare and depreciated Milton. To the eye of the critic, *Paradise Lost* and *Macbeth* were built of common brick, while Dryden's *Satires* and *Fables* shone with the lustre of Parian stone. Yet we would not for a moment deny Dryden's exalted rank as a poet and a master of the English tongue.

Our knowledge of Dryden's early life is meagre. Born of Puritan parents on August 9, 1631, at Aldwinkle, in Northamptonshire, he received his school education at Westminster, A.D. 1631 under Dr. Busby, of birchen memory. Then, elected a Westminster scholar, he passed to Trinity

College, Cambridge, where, no doubt, he wrote English verses, as he had often done at school. But he seems to have passed without marked distinction through his college course.

When the great Oliver died, the young poet created some sensation by a copy of verses which he wrote upon the event. Two years later, he celebrated the restoration of Charles Stuart, in a poem called *Astræa Redux*. So sudden a change of political principle has been harshly blamed; but we can scarcely censure young Dryden for feeling, as all England felt at the time, that a load of fear had rolled away when Charles came back from exile to fill his father's throne.

Inheriting only a small estate of £60 a year, Dryden was compelled to take to literature as a profession, devoting his pen at first to the service of the newly-opened theatres. *The Wild Gallant* was his first play. His marriage with Lady Elizabeth Howard took place on December 1, 1663.

Then play after play came flowing from his pen, all tainted with the licentiousness of that age, and cramped, like the shape of a tight-laced dandy, into rhyming couplets, which were but a poor substitute for the noble music of Shakespeare's blank verse. In all, during eight-and-twenty years, Dryden produced eight-and-twenty plays, among the chief of which we may note *The Indian Emperor* (1665) and *The Conquest of Granada* (1670). This dramatic authorship was then the only field in which an author could hope to reap a fair crop of guineas, for the sale of books was as yet miserably small. It is sad to contemplate a man of genius driven to waste the force of his mind upon a kind of writing for which his talents were but slightly fitted—sad to see the composer of one of the finest English odes, and of satires that rival the masterpieces of Juvenal, forced to drudge for a dissolute green-room, and to play the rhyming buffoon for a ribald pit.

Let us turn from the sight of wasted genius to Dryden's other works. Though writing so busily for the

stage, he had yet found spare hours to produce his *Annus Mirabilis*, a poem on the year of the Great Fire, and his *Essay on Dramatic Poesy*—in the latter of which he labours hard but vainly to prove that rhyme is suited to tragedy. The *Essay* is a valuable piece of criticism, which derives additional charms from the elegance of its prose and its frank avowal of Shakespeare's surpassing genius. And here, dismissing Dryden's prose, we may say that few English authors have written prose so well. His *Prefaces* and *Dedications*—things which, though now nearly banished from our books, were then most elaborate pieces of writing—are brilliant and polished essays upon various topics of literature and art.

Not unprofitably did Dryden fight the battle of life with his pen. His dramatic work brought him over £300 a year; in 1670 he became poet-laureate (worth £100 a year and a tierce of wine), and historiographer royal (worth another £100 a year).

At fifty Dryden's genius was in full bloom. In 1681 he produced that marvellous group of satiric portraits which forms the first part of *Absalom and Achitophel*. Old Testament names, borrowed from David's day, denote the leading men of the corrupted English court. Monmouth was Absalom; Shaftesbury, Achitophel; Buckingham, Zimri.\* And A.D. 1681 never has poet winged more terrible weapons of political warfare than the shower of bright and poisoned lines that fell on the luckless objects of Dryden's rage. Conscious for the first time, after this great effort, of the dreadful wounds his pen could give, the poet did not henceforth spare its use. Other satires, *The Medal*, launched against Shaftesbury alone, and *Mac Flecknoe*, hurled at the head of the poet Shadwell, speedily followed; but neither of these came near in poetry or wit to his great satire of 1681.

\* The satirist had a special grudge against Buckingham, who, in 1671, brought out a farce called *The Rehearsal*, in which Dryden and his heroic dramas were held up to public ridicule.

The poem, *Religio Laici*, written about this time, displays the author's mind convulsed with religious doubts. A severe mental struggle resulted in his abandonment of Protestantism for the Roman Catholic faith—an event which, unhappily for his reputation, occurred at a time when such a change was the high-road to royal favour. It is right, however, to say that the pension of £100, which some believe him to have received as the reward of his defection, had been already granted by Charles, and was now merely continued by James. On the whole, the change seems to have been one for which Dryden had deeper motives than the desire of gold or royal favour. He reared his children, and died himself, in the Roman Catholic faith. In a beautiful allegory, *The Hind and Panther*, he exhibits his new-born affection for the Church of his adoption, which he paints as a “milk-white hind, immortal and unchanged.” The Church of England is represented by the panther, “the fairest creature of the spotted kind;” while dissenting sects play their various parts as bears, hares, boars, and other animals. In spite of the grotesque antithesis involved in making wild beasts discuss theology, it affords a splendid specimen of Dryden's chief quality—his power of reasoning in rhyme.

When William and Mary ascended the English throne, Dryden, who thus lost his laureateship with its guineas and its wine, sank into a bookseller's hack, depending for daily bread almost entirely upon his pen. He then undertook a work for which his genius was quite unfitted—the translation of Virgil into English verse. The verses of the Latin poet have the velvet bloom, the dewy softness, the delicate odour of a flower; the version of the Englishman has the hardness and brilliance of a gem: and, when we find only flowers cut in stone, where we expect to see flowers in veritable bloom—no matter how skilful the lapidary, how rich the colouring, or pure the water of the jewel—admiring the triumph of art, we miss

the sweetness of nature, and long to exchange the rainbow play of coloured light for the fragrance and tender hues of the living blossom. For this heavy task of turning the *Georgics* and the *Æneid* into English pentameters, the work of three toil- 1697  
some years, the poet received £1,200. The A.D.  
translation was published in 1697. It was not his first task of the kind. The year before, he had translated part of Juvenal and all Persius; and, earlier, had employed his pen upon scattered poems from Horace, Ovid, and Theocritus. We think sorrowfully of the old man toiling at his desk upon this heavy task, often pursuing the "sad mechanic exercise" with little heart; for we believe he must have felt that his English rendering did not breathe the true spirit of Virgil's verse. Yet, in spite of such occasional clouds, the sunset of his life was fair. He was the great literary lion of his day; and no country stranger of any taste for letters thought his round of London sights complete, unless he had been to Will's Coffee-house in Russell Street, where, ensconced in a snug armchair, by the fire or out on the balcony, according to the season, old John sat, pipe in hand, laying down the law upon disputed points in literature or politics. Happy was the favoured rustic who could boast to his admiring friends that he had got a pinch of snuff from the great man's box!

During these sunset years he wrote his finest lyric—the *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*, which is generally known as *Alexander's Feast*, and which, notwithstanding Hallam's unfavourable opinion, still remains a favourite. It cost him a fortnight's toil. Changing his metre with the variations of his theme, the poet sweeps the strings of the fierce and softer passions of the human breast; or, to use another figure, choosing with rapid and skilful finger the brightest threads from what is to many the tangled skein of our English tongue, he weaves of them a brilliant tapestry, glowing with a succession of fair and terrible pictures.



No English poem better illustrates the wonderful pliancy of the tongue we speak. But it takes a master's touch to weave the threads as Dryden did ; his silk and gold would change in meaner hands to hemp and wire.

The composition of his *Fables* occupied the poet's last two years. For this work, of about twelve thousand lines, he received something over £250 from Jacob Tonson, who sold books at the Judge's Head in Chancery Lane. The *Fables* rank with Dryden's finest works, and consist of tales from Boccaccio and Chaucer, dressed in modern diction.

After a life of literary toil, productive of many splendid works, Dryden let fall his pen from May 1, a dying hand. At sixty-eight, a neglected in-1700 flammation of the foot carried him off after a A.D. short illness. His body was buried in Westminster Abbey, where his name may be read among the names of the great dead.

Most of this poet's faults sprang from the corrupting spread of French influences. Ever since the days of the Confessor and the Conqueror, France has been the arbiter of English fashions in the way of dress : our British ladies still prize the bonnets, silks, and gloves of Paris and Lyons far beyond those of their native land. But it was a black day for England when the ship which carried Charles the Second to a throne bore also over the narrow sea a cargo of French vices and false tastes, to spread their poison through court and coffee-house. The trick of writing tragedies in rhyme—the trick of intermingling firm, strong English sense, with tinsel-scrap of French, like *fraicheur* and *fougue*—the trick of often substituting cold, glittering mannerisms for the fresh light of natural language—are the chief symptoms of this foreign disease in Dryden's work. In that marble palace which, according to Johnson, he reared from the rude blocks of the English tongue, there are too many gilded cornices and panellings from Versailles. Yet in this foreign

adornment he was far surpassed by his imitator and admirer of the next generation, little Alexander Pope, who unquestionably ranks *facile princeps* among the painters and decorators of the literary guild.

## CHARACTER OF SHAFTESBURY.

(FROM "ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.")

Of these the false Achitophel was first ;  
 A name to all succeeding ages curst :  
 For close designs and crooked counsels fit ;  
 Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit ;  
 Restless, unfixed in principles and place ;  
 In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace :  
 A fiery soul, which, working out its way,  
 Fretted the pigmy body to decay,  
 And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.  
 A daring pilot in extremity ;  
 Pleased with the danger when the waves went high,  
 He sought the storms ; but, for a calm unfit,  
 Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.  
 Great wits are sure to madness near allied,  
 And thin partitions do their bounds divide ;  
 Else why should he, with wealth and honour blest,  
 Refuse his age the needful hours of rest ?  
 Punish a body which he could not please ;  
 Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease ?  
 And all to leave what with his toil he won,  
 To that unfeathered two-legged thing—a son.

## CHARACTER OF BUCKINGHAM.

Some of their chiefs were princes of the land :  
 In the first rank of these did Zimri stand ;  
 A man so various that he seemed to be,  
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome :  
 Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,  
 Was ev'rything by starts, and nothing long ;  
 But, in the course of one revolving moon,  
 Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon.  
 Blest madman ! who could ev'ry hour employ  
 With something new to wish, or to enjoy.  
 Railing and praising were his usual themes ;  
 And both, to shew his judgment, in extremes ;  
 So over-violent, or over-civil,  
 That every man with him was God or devil.  
 In squandering wealth was his peculiar art ;  
 Nothing went unrewarded but desert :  
 Beggared by fools, whom still he found too late,  
 He had his jest, and they had his estate.

He laughed himself from court, then sought relief  
 By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief ;  
 For, spite of him, the weight of business fell  
 On Absalom and wise Achitophel ;  
 Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,  
 He left not faction, but of that was left.

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## CHAPTER VI.

JOHN LOCKE.

Born 1632 A.D. . . . . Died 1704 A.D.

LOCKE's great book, *An Essay concerning the Human Understanding*, is one of the epoch-making works in the history of thought. He, therefore, well deserves a place among the great names of English literature.

Born in 1632 at Wrington, near Bristol, he received his education at Westminster School, and Christ Church, Oxford, and in the halls of that venerable college he learned, as the illustrious Bacon had learned at Cambridge, to dislike the philosophy of old Aristotle, at least when applied to the production of mere wordy bubbles by the schoolmen of Western Europe. Choosing the profession of medicine, he bent his great mind to the mastery of its details ; but the feebleness of his constitution prevented him from facing the hard and wearing work of a physician's life. Well for England that it was so ; else one of the greatest of our philosophers might have drudged his life away in the dimness of a poor country surgery, had he not most luckily possessed a pair of delicate lungs. So the student turned diplomatist, and went to Germany as secretary to Sir Walter Vane. Declining an invitation to enter the Church, he afterwards found a home in the house of Lord Ashley, where he acted as tutor to the son, and afterwards to the grandson, of his patron. The last-named pupil became that distinguished moralist whose lofty periods delighted the

*litterati* of Queen Anne's reign. To the fortunes of Lord Ashley, who received the earldom of Shaftesbury in 1672, Locke attached himself with real fidelity ; and with these fortunes his own brightened or grew dark. At the table of his noble friend he met the first Englishmen of the day ; and when, in 1675, fears of consumption led him to seek health in the sunnier air of France, his residence at Montpelier and at Paris brought him into contact with many eminent French scholars and literary men. When Shaftesbury regained power, in 1679, he called Locke to his side ; and when misfortune came, the earl and his faithful friend found a refuge in hospitable Holland. There Locke lived for six years (1682-88), enjoying the society of learned friends—especially the weekly meeting which they established for the discussion of philosophical questions—and patiently bringing on towards its end the great book which has made his name famous. It mattered little to the invalid scholar, in his quiet lodging at Amsterdam, that his name had, by command of the king, been blotted out from the list of Christ Church men. A real danger threatened him when the English ambassador demanded that he, with many others, should be given up by the Dutch government, as aiders and abettors of Monmouth in that ill-fated invasion which ended on the field of Sedgemoor. But the clouds blew past, and the Revolution soon reopened his native land to the exile. A man so distinguished would have been a strong pillar of William's throne, had his health permitted him to engage actively in the public service. As it was, he became a Commissioner of Appeals at £200 a year, and afterwards, for a short time, one of the members of the Council of Trade ; but London 1704 fog and smoke soon drove the asthmatic old A.D. man into the purer air of the country. Oates, in Essex, the mansion of his friend Sir Francis Masham, opened its kindly doors to him ; and there, in 1704, he died.

Locke's *Essay*, published in 1690, was the fruit of nearly twenty years' laborious thought. One day, while he was conversing with five or six friends, doubts and difficulties rose so thick around the subject of their talk that they could not see their way. Locke, to use his own words, proposed that "it was necessary to examine their own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were, or were not, fitted to deal with." So the four books of the *Essay* began, and his exile enabled him to bring them to a close. In clear, plain, homely English, sometimes rather tawdrily dressed with figures of speech, he lays down his doctrine of ideas, which he derives from two great sources—sensation and reflection. The third book treats of words, their defects and their abuse.

His chief minor works are, *Letters concerning Toleration*, written partly in Holland—two *Treatises on Civil Government*, designed to maintain the title of King William to the English throne—*Thoughts concerning Education*, in which he deals not only with book-learning, but with dress, food, accomplishments, morality, recreation, health, all things that belong to the development of the mind or the body of a child—and a sequel to this, called *The Conduct of the Understanding*, which was published after his death.

#### THE POWER OF PRACTICE.

Some men are remarked for pleasantness in raillery; others, for apologies, and apposite, diverting stories. This is apt to be taken for the effect of pure nature, and that the rather, because it is not got by rules, and those who excel in either of them, never purposely set themselves to the study of it as an art to be learnt. But yet it is true that at first some lucky hit, which took with somebody, and gained him commendation, encouraged him to try again, inclined his thoughts and endeavours that way, till at last he insensibly got a facility in it without perceiving how; and that is attributed wholly to nature which was much more the effect of use and practice. I do not deny that natural disposition may often give the first rise to it; but that never carries a man far without use and exercise, and it is practice alone that brings the powers of the mind as well as those of the body to their perfection. Many a good poetic vein is buried under a trade, and never produces anything, for want of improvement. We see the ways of discourse and reasoning are



DAVID HUME.





very different, even concerning the same matter, at court and in the university. And he that will go but from Westminster Hall to the Exchange, will find a different genius and turn in their ways of talking; and one cannot think that all whose lot fell in the city were born with different parts from those who were bred at the university or inns of court.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### OTHER WRITERS OF THE FIFTH ERA.

#### POETS.

WENTWORTH DILLON, Earl of Roscommon, born in 1633, was the nephew of Strafford. He wrote, according to Pope, the only unspotted poetry in the days of Charles the Second. His chief work is called *An Essay on Translated Verse*; he also translated Horace's *Art of Poetry*, and wrote minor poems. He died in 1685.

CHARLES SACKVILLE, Earl of Dorset, born in 1638, wrote, among other songs, one beginning *To all you ladies now at land*, which he composed at sea the night before a battle. He held high posts at court under Charles the Second and William the Third. His verses were only occasional recreations. He is rather to be honoured for his patronage and aid of such men as Butler and Dryden than for his own compositions. He died in 1706.

SIR CHARLES SEDLEY, born in 1639, was in his prime during the reign of Charles the Second. His *Plays*, and especially his *Songs*, are sparkling, light, and graceful, with perhaps more of the true Cavalier spirit in them than the works of contemporary lyrists display. He took a prominent part in bringing about the Revolution of 1688. Thirteen years later (1701) he died.

JOHN WILMOT, Earl of Rochester, was born in 1647. His early death at thirty-three, brought on by his own wild and drunken profligacy, left him but a short time to win a writer's fame. Yet some of his *Songs* have lived.

THOMAS OTWAY, the greatest dramatic name of Dryden's age, was born in 1652 at Trotton, in Sussex. The son of a clergyman, he was educated at Winchester and Oxford. From the halls of Oxford he passed to the London stage, but had only small success as an actor. Not so when he took up the dramatist's pen. Almost the only gleam of prosperity that favoured the poet shone in 1677, when, by the interest of the Earl of Plymouth, he was made a cornet of dragoons, and shipped off to Flanders. But he soon lost his commission by dissipation, and returned to his play-writing. He died in 1685, a poor and wasted debauchee, who had yet, by his tragedies, greatly surpassed the laboured dramas of Dryden, and had come not far short of the most pathetic scenes in Shakespeare. Three years before his death he produced *Venice Preserved*, the play for which his name is still honoured on the English stage. The *Orphan* is a powerful tragedy.

MATTHEW PRIOR, born in 1664 at Wimborne-Minster, in Dorsetshire, rose from humble life—his uncle kept a tavern at Charing Cross—to be secretary at the Hague, ambassador to the Court of Versailles, and a Commissioner of Trade. The kindness of the Earl of Dorset, who found the little waiter of the Rummer Inn reading Horace one day, enabled him to enter St. John's, Cambridge, of which college he became a Fellow. He won his place in the diplomatic service by writing, in conjunction with Montagu, *The Town and Country Mouse*, a burlesque upon Dryden's *Hind and Panther*. Prior's best-known poems are light occasional pieces of the Artificial school. His longest and most laboured work is a serious poem called *Solomon*. After having lain, untried, in prison for two years, accused by the Whigs of treasonable negotiation with France, he lived on the profits of his poems and the bounty of Lord Oxford, at whose seat of Wimpole he died in 1721.

JOHN PHILIPS, author of *The Splendid Shilling* and

other works, was born in 1676, the son of the Archdeacon of Salop. During his short life—he died in 1709, aged thirty-three—he wrote several poems in the intervals of his medical studies. *The Splendid Shilling* imitates and tries to parody the style of Milton.

#### PROSE WRITERS.

HENRY MORE, born in 1614, lived a hermit life at Cambridge, much as the poet Gray did in later days. He was a great admirer of Plato, and wrote much on metaphysical subjects, of which the mistier kind had a strong attraction for his pen. *The Mystery of Godliness*, *The Mystery of Iniquity*, *The Immortality of the Soul* are among the themes he dealt with. More died in 1687. He wrote poems also, of which the principal is called *Psychozoia, or Life of the Soul*.

JOHN OWEN, born in 1616 at Stadhampton, in Oxfordshire, was a great favourite with Cromwell, who took him to Dublin and to Edinburgh, and caused him to be made Vice-Chancellor of Oxford. He was long the leading minister of the Independent body. Among his numerous but far from graceful writings we may name *An Exposition of the Hebrews*, *A Discourse of the Holy Spirit*, and *The Divine Original of the Scriptures*. This amiable and learned man, whom even his opponents could not dislike, died in 1683.

EDWARD STILLINGFLEET, whose life extended from 1635 to 1699, became Bishop of Worcester in 1689. He wrote *Origines Sacrae, or a Rational Account of Natural and Revealed Religion*, and also a *Defence of the Trinity*—the latter in reply to part of Locke's Essay. Stillingfleet's *Sermons*, too, are justly remembered for their good sense and force of style.

THOMAS BURNET, Master of the Charter-house, was born in 1635, and died in 1715. His chief work, originally in Latin, but rendered into English in 1684–89, was *The Sacred Theory of the Earth*. Written in a day when geological science was yet unborn, it is, of course,

full of error and wild speculation ; but its eloquence and picturesque grandeur of style redeem it from oblivion. Burnet's other principal works were *Archæologia Philosophica*, *On Christian Faith and Duties*, and *The State of the Dead and Reviving*. He held some peculiar religious views, which debarred him from preferment in the Church.

THOMAS SPRAT, born in 1635 at Beaminster, in Dorsetshire, was educated at Wadham College, Oxford, and became Bishop of Rochester in 1684. He wrote with remarkable eloquence a *History of the Royal Society*, *An Account of the Rye-house Plot*, and a short *Life of Cowley*. Sprat died in 1713.

LADY RACHEL RUSSELL, the daughter of the Earl of Southampton, and the devoted wife of that Lord William Russell who was beheaded in 1683 for an alleged share in the Rye-house Plot, deserves remembrance here for her beautiful *Letters*. They were published fifty years after her death, which took place in 1723.

WILLIAM WYCHERLEY was born near Shrewsbury in 1640. Educated as a lawyer, he abandoned his profession for the worst dissipations of London life. His comedies, upon which his reputation as a literary man is founded, reflect the pollutions of the writer's age. When it is said that they were the prevailing fashion with the wits and beauties of Charles the Second's court, their character becomes clear at once. Wycherley died in 1716.

WILLIAM SHERLOCK, Dean of St. Paul's, and known as the author of a *Practical Discourse concerning Death*, was born in 1641. He wrote much against the Dissenters. His *Vindication of the Trinity* involved him in a controversy with South. He wrote also a treatise *On the Immortality of the Soul*. Sherlock died in 1707.

GILBERT BURNET, born at Edinburgh in 1643, was the son of a Scottish judge. Having graduated at Aberdeen, he entered the Church. Minister of Saltoun, in Haddingtonshire ; Professor of Divinity at Glasgow ;

preacher in the Rolls Chapel, London ; an exile on the Continent, residing chiefly at the Hague — he became, at the Revolution, Bishop of Salisbury, as a reward for his adherence to William of Orange. His literary fame rests principally on his historical works — the *History of the Reformation*, and the *History of My Own Time*. The latter, sketching the Civil War and the history of Cromwell, enters with greater minuteness into the period between the Restoration and the Treaty of Utrecht. Burnet's work on the *Thirty-nine Articles* is his chief theological treatise. He died in 1715.

JOHN STRYPE, born in 1643, deserves remembrance for his biographical and antiquarian works. *Lives of Cranmer, Cheke, Grindal, Whitgift*, and many others proceeded from his pen, besides the *Annals of the Reformation* and *Ecclesiastical Memorials*. He was a clergyman of the Church of England, and held many posts, the last being a lectureship at Hackney. He died in 1737, aged ninety-four.

WILLIAM PENN, the son of the celebrated admiral, was born in 1644. Though more distinguished as a colonist than as an author, he wrote several treatises in defence of Quakerism. *No Cross No Crown*, *The Conduct of Life*, and *A Brief Account of the People called Quakers*, are among his works. He died in 1718.

ROBERT BARCLAY, born in 1648 at Gordonstown, in Morayshire, followed his father, Colonel Barclay, in joining the virtuous and God-fearing sect then called Quakers, but now known as Friends. His *Apology* for these persecuted Christians is a remarkable theological work. He died in 1690.

DANIEL DEFOE, born about 1661, was the son of a London butcher. After trying various occupations — hosier, tile-maker, and woollen merchant — he devoted himself to literature, and took up pen on the Whig side. For his political attacks he suffered the pillory, imprisonment, and fine. But his greatest efforts were works of fiction, of which *Robinson Crusoe*,



published in 1719, is the chief. No English writer has ever excelled him in his power of painting fictitious events in the colours of truth. His simple and natural style has much to do with this. *The Relation of Mrs. Veal's Apparition*, published as a puff to move the dead stock of a book called *Drelincourt on Death*, affords perhaps the best specimen of Defoe's wonderful power of clothing fiction with the garb of truth. He died in 1731, leaving behind him many debts, and a host of works amounting to over two hundred and fifty books and pamphlets.

MATTHEW HENRY, born in Flintshire in 1662, studied law, but afterwards became a Nonconformist minister. Chester and Hackney were the scenes of his labour. His name is now remembered chiefly for that *Commentary on the Bible* which his death in 1714 prevented him from finishing.

RICHARD BENTLEY, who was born in 1662 and died in 1742, became Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Regius Professor of Divinity in that university. He was probably the greatest classical scholar England ever produced. Editions of *Horace*, *Terence*, and *Phædrus* are among his principal works. He also edited *Milton*, but with very small success.

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH, born in 1664, was a sugar-baker's son, who produced architectural designs, and wrote witty but licentious comedies. Under Queen Anne he was Clarencieux King-at-arms; and under George the First, Comptroller of the royal works. *The Provoked Wife* is perhaps his best play. Blenheim and Castle Howard were his chief works as an architect. Vanbrugh died in 1726.

JOHN ARBUTHNOT, born in Kincardineshire in 1667, was noted in London as a physician, a writer, and a wit. He wrote, besides several other things, much of *Martin Scriblerus*, published in Pope's works; the *History of John Bull* (1712), which was a fine piece of ridicule aimed at Marlborough; treatises on the *Scolding of the Ancients*, and the *Art of Political Lying*.

The titles of his works convey their satirical tone. He was physician in ordinary to Queen Anne, and died in 1735.

WILLIAM CONGREVE was an exception to the common lot of his dramatic brethren, for he lived and died in opulence and ease. Born in Yorkshire in 1670, he became at twenty-two a dramatic author. But he had the good fortune to obtain several government situations, which, when swelled by the emoluments of the secretaryship of Jamaica, received in 1715, were worth about £1,200 a year. The same calamity that darkened the old age of Milton fell on the latter days of Congreve; but the licentious dramatist had not the same visions to solace his hours of blindness as passed before the mental eye of the great Puritan. Congreve wrote one tragedy, *The Mourning Bride*. His comedies are steeped in vice. How much this writer was idolized in his own day may be judged from the strange honours paid by a Duchess of Marlborough to his memory. Having caused images of the dead poet to be made, one of ivory and one of wax, she placed the former daily at her table, and caused the feet of the latter to be regularly blistered and rubbed by her doctors, as had been done for the gouty limbs of the dying man when he was a member of her household. Congreve's life came to a close in 1730.

GEORGE FARQUHAR, born in Londonderry in 1678, was an actor, a military officer, and a writer of comedies. His chief plays are *The Recruiting Officer* (1706) and *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707). He died in his thirtieth year. Wycherley, Vanbrugh, Congreve, and Farquhar form a group of comic dramatists, who reflect vividly in their works the life which courtiers and fashionables lived during the half century between the Restoration and the accession of the House of Hanover.

## SIXTH ERA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

FROM THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF "THE TATLER"  
IN 1709 A.D. TO THE PUBLICATION OF  
"PAMELA" IN 1740 A.D.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### NEWSPAPERS AND SERIALS.

THE *Acta Diurna* of ancient Rome, the *Gazetta* of Venice, and the *Affiche* of France contained the germs from which grew the modern newspaper or journal. Small sheets or packets of news began to appear in England during the reign of James the First; and when the Thirty Years' War set all Britain on the *qui vive*, one of these, entitled *The News of the Present Week*, was established in 1622, to give the latest particulars of the great Continental struggle. This may be considered our first *regular* newspaper. The earlier news-pamphlets had no fixed time of publication.

The Civil War between Charles and his Parliament gave a political tone to this infant journalism. Each party had several organs, and a furious paper war kept pace with the sterner conflict that convulsed the land. Very curious and often comical are the titles of these news-books—for papers they can scarcely be called, being chiefly in the form of quarto pamphlets. Once, twice, thrice a week there came out a host of bitter and malicious *Scotch Doves*, *Parliament*





EDWARD GIBBON.

*Kites, Secret Owls*; and when *The Weekly Discoverer* saw the light, at once there sprang up a rival, *The Weekly Discoverer Stripped Naked*. *Mercurys* of many sorts abounded.

The reigns of Charles the Second and his brother James were fruitful in newspapers of small size, and generally of short life. The fantastic folly of the age was often reflected in both title and contents. How we should laugh now at the appearance of a paper entitled, as was one of these, *News from the Land of Chivalry, being the Pleasant and Delectable History and Wonderful and Strange Adventures of Don Rugero de Strangento, Knight of the Squeaking Fiddlestick*. Macaulay tells us that the quantity of matter contained in one of these publications during a whole year was not more than is often found in two numbers of *The Times*. Of *The London Gazette*, which came out on Mondays and Thursdays, "the contents generally were a royal proclamation, two or three Tory addresses, notices of two or three promotions, an account of a skirmish between the imperial troops and the Janisseries on the Danube, a description of a highwayman, an announcement of a grand cock-fight between two persons of honour, and an advertisement offering a reward for a strayed dog. The whole made up two pages of moderate size."

At this time the *Newsletter* did the work of our daily papers. News was to be learned chiefly in the coffee-houses, which were thronged all day long by the idle men, and for some hours were frequented by even the busiest men in the capital. The evening before post-day the correspondents of the country districts gathered all the scraps of intelligence they had collected in their daily rambles into the form of a letter, which went down duly by the post to enlighten justices of peace in their offices, country rectors in their studies, village tradesmen and neighbouring farmers in the sanded tap-rooms of rustic alehouses. When we remember the slowness of



communication a hundred and fifty years ago, it will not seem wonderful that the country was a week or a fortnight behind the town in the current history of the times.

It is not our purpose here to enter into a detailed account of the growth of the English newspaper. To do so would carry us far beyond our available space. The press, when freed in 1694 from restrictions on its liberty, advanced with rapid strides. There was something of a check when the Tory Government in 1712 laid a stamp-tax on newspapers—a halfpenny on half a sheet, a penny on a whole sheet, and a shilling on every advertisement. But through all checks its onward progress was steady and sure.

Yet it was not until the end of the eighteenth century that the Parliamentary debates began to be reported at any length. Nor was it without a fierce struggle that the London printers won this important right. Of those who did stout battle for the public in this contest, William Woodfall was most prominent. A meagre summary at first, and some days later an elaborate version of the speeches, some perhaps written, but many certainly retouched, by Dr. Johnson or other leading *littérateur* of the day, formed the Parliamentary debate as it appeared in print before Woodfall's reporting began. Having set up the *Diary* in 1789, this extraordinary man would listen for many hours, from the strangers' gallery in St. Stephen's, to the progress of the debate, and then, going to the printing-office, would write off from memory all that he had heard. His report sometimes extended to sixteen columns—each not, of course, containing anything like the matter of a column of *The Times* of our day, but yet large enough to make the feat a rare and remarkable instance of what the educated memory can retain. This, however, was too much for a man to do for more than a few years. There are, indeed, few men who could do it at all. The employment of

several reporters to divide the labour, and the subsequent introduction of reporting in shorthand, enabled the papers to furnish earlier and more accurate accounts of what was done in the Houses of Parliament.

On January 1, 1788, appeared the first number of *The Times*, the new form of the little *Daily Universal Register* that had already been for three years in existence. It was a puny, meagre thing compared with its gigantic offspring, the modern newspaper, which is delivered damp from the press at thousands of London doors every morning before early breakfast time, and before the sun has set has been read over nearly all England. But it grew and throve; and when, in 1814, the power of steam was employed to work the press, the foundation was laid of a magnificent success.

There is something feverish about the rate at which the drums of the newspaper press revolve nowadays. At ten or eleven o'clock at night some noted member of the House rises to speak. For two hours he enchains the House with his eloquence, and perhaps concludes by turning back on his foes the weapon aimed at his party. At twelve or one, in some brightly-lighted room, an editor sits down to his desk, with a digest of this very speech before him, to tear it to pieces or applaud it to the skies, as it may happen to chime or clash with his own opinions. Not far away sit the reporters, busied with their task of transcribing their shorthand notes for the press. On for the bare life race all the busy pens. The wheels of the brain are all working at top speed and highest pressure. At last article and reports are finished. Then comes the rattle of the caseroom. The great presses begin their swift rounds; and before eight o'clock in the morning the bolt of the Press has fallen on the speech-maker or his foes, as the case may be.

Journalism employs thousands of able pens over all the kingdom, and has done much to lift the literary profession from the low position in which all but its most prominent members lay during a great part of

the eighteenth century. Let us now turn to take a brief view of the rise of those other periodicals whose abundance and excellence form one of the leading literary features of the present age.

Although Defoe's *Review*, begun in 1704, was, strictly speaking, the first English serial, it was not until Richard Steele and Joseph Addison began to write the pleasant and eloquent papers of *The Tatler*, that the foundation of our periodical literature was firmly laid. *The Spectator* followed—a yet nobler specimen of the early and now old-fashioned serial. Then came, at various intervals throughout the eighteenth century, and with varying fortunes, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, *The Guardian*, and *The Rambler*—the last of which was written nearly all by Samuel Johnson; and in Scotland *The Mirror* and *The Lounger*, to which Henry Mackenzie was the principal contributor.

The older periodicals which now lie upon our tables date for the most part from the early years of the nineteenth century. We take the Reviews first for a few words of comment. Earliest, and in former times most brilliant of these large Quarterlies, was *The Edinburgh Review*, whose Whig principles are symbolized by the buff and blue of its pasteboard cover. One day in 1802, Sydney Smith, meeting Brougham and some other young Liberals at Jeffrey's house, which was then on the third floor of No. 18 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh, proposed to start a Review. The happy idea took the fancy of all present; and the first number of the *Edinburgh* soon appeared. Its circulation reached in 1813 to 12,000 or 13,000 copies. This periodical was afterwards enriched by the stately essays of Macaulay.

When the Tories saw the success and felt the power of the *Edinburgh*, they, in 1809, started *The Quarterly Review*, which has ever since been growing in public favour. John Gibson Lockhart, the son-in-law and biographer of Sir Walter Scott, was for many years

editor of the *Quarterly*. *The Westminster Review* began in 1824 to represent Radical opinions. These serials and their younger brethren, appearing every quarter in thick volumes at a comparatively high price, contain articles on the leading books and political questions of the day. A great work is often singly reviewed; but the usual plan adopted is to collect a number of works bearing on a topic of prominent interest, and upon these to found an essay of tolerable length. Later, a lighter sort of review artillery was brought into the literary and political battlefield. Discarding the heavy guns fired at long intervals as lumbering and comparatively ineffective, the writers of *The Spectator* and *The Saturday Review* discharged weekly volleys from their light ordnance. *The Athenæum* stands at the head of the weekly reviews, which are devoted solely to literature, science, and art.

The Magazine, which is generally a monthly serial, though dealing somewhat in light reviewing, aims rather at the amusement and instruction of its readers by a dozen or so of original articles, including tales, sketches, essays, and short poems. *Blackwood* and the *Cornhill* are the older favourites; but recently there has come upon our tables a flood of periodicals of this class—some political, some literary, many of them beautifully illustrated, numbering their readers by the thousand, and supplying for a small price a wonderful assortment of literary provender.

A class of serials deserving a longer notice than we can give them here are the Encyclopædias. Chief of these is *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, which renews its youth. *Chambers's Encyclopædia* and *Nelson's Encyclopædia* are smaller works well adapted for popular use. No men did more for periodical literature than the Messrs. Chambers of Edinburgh. Theirs was the credit of having set on foot the cheapest form of serial by the publication, in 1832, of their *Journal*, which has lived through a long career of

usefulness, and is flourishing still in almost pristine vigour amid a host of younger rivals.

We have in this chapter glanced along the whole course of our serial literature up to the present day, because we shall not have an opportunity of returning to the subject, and no historical sketch of English literature would be complete without such a view. Laying down the last number of the *Quarterly* or the *Cornhill*, we bethink us of the little leaf on which, two hundred years ago, Dick Steele and Mr. Addison wrote the first magazine and review articles that deserve the name in English literature, and are filled with wonder at the vast increase of the kind. There are many Addisons and very many Steeles among the literary men of our day; but so great is the supply of healthy, graceful English writing, and so much have matters altered in the way of remunerating literary men, that the Commissioners of Stamps and the Secretaries of State are not chosen by the Prime Minister from among the contributors to *Blackwood* or *The Edinburgh Review*. There is the pleasant thought to compensate for this want of fame and of political promotion, that every man of letters who can use his pen and can sit steadily at his desk for some hours a day is sure of earning a comfortable livelihood and holding a respectable place in society. In Queen Anne's day it was Addison and Steele, Pope and Swift, and a few more, who got all the fame and the guineas, who drank their wine and spent their afternoons in the saloons of the great; while the great majority of authors starved and shivered in garrets, or pawned their clothes for the food their pens could not win. In modern days there are few political prizes, but there is widespread comfort; and the man qualified to live by his pen is sure of finding work to do, if to his ability he but adds the important qualities of industry and common-sense.

## CHAPTER II.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

Born 1672 A.D. . . . . Died 1719 A.D.

WHEN Joseph Addison was born in 1672, his father was Rector of Milston, near Amesbury, in Wiltshire. He received the best part of his education at the Charterhouse in London, a school which has sent forth many of our first wits and men of letters. It was there that he met Dick Steele, a good-hearted, mischief-loving Irish boy; and the juvenile friendship, cemented no doubt by numerous tart transactions and much illegal Latin verse making, was renewed at college and in later life. At the age of fifteen Addison left school for Queen's College, Oxford; two years later he obtained a scholarship in Magdalen, where his Latin poems won for him considerable renown.

His first flight in English verse was an *Address to Dryden* (1693), by which he gained the great man's friendship—no slight matter to a newly-fledged poet whose face was hardly known in the coffee-houses. Dryden admitted his *Translation of part of the Fourth Georgic* into a book of Miscellanies. Other poems followed through the same pen. Some verses in honour of the king, though poor enough, won the favour of Lord Somers, through whom they reached the royal hand; and the fortunate writer received a pension of £300 a year, that he might cultivate his classic tastes by travel on the Continent. So, 1699 with a full purse and the reputation of being A.D. the most elegant scholar of his day in England, Addison set out upon the grand tour. From Italy he wrote a poetical *Letter to Lord Halifax*, which is looked upon as the finest of his works in English verse.

King William's death, however, stopping his pension, cut short his travelled ease; and home he came, a poor yet cheerful scholar, to wait quietly



for fortune in a shabby lodging up two pair of stairs in the Haymarket. While he lay thus under eclipse the great battle of Blenheim was fought; and being employed by Treasurer Godolphin to write a poem in praise of the event, his performance of the task gave such satisfaction to the Ministry that he was soon made Commissioner of Appeals. The lucky poem, known as *The Campaign*, chanted loudly the praises of Marlborough, who is compared, in a passage that took the whole town by storm, to an angel guiding the whirlwind. Mr. Commissioner Addison changed by-and-by into Mr. Under-Secretary of State; Mr. Under-Secretary, into the Secretary for Ireland; the Secretary for Ireland, into one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State (1717), the last being the greatest eminence reached by Addison in that most slippery profession of politics.

To mount so many rounds of the ladder took him a full dozen of years, during which his pen had been doing its finest work. Though he made his literary *début* as a poet, he achieved his highest fame as the writer of prose.

In the spring of 1709 his old schoolfellow Steele started a tri-weekly sheet called *The Tatler*, which for a penny gave a short article and some scraps of news. Addison, who was then in Ireland, wrote occasionally for this paper. But when *The Tatler*, after living for nearly two years, gave place to the more famous daily sheet called *The Spectator*, Addison became a

constant contributor, and by his prose papers 1711 exalted the periodical to the highest rank A.D. among the English classics. There, on the tray beside the delicate porcelain cups from which beauty and beau sipped their fragrant chocolate or tea by the toilette-table in the late noonday, lay the welcome little sheet of sparkling wit or elegant criticism, giving a new zest to the meal, and suggesting fresh topics for the afternoon chat in the toy shops or on the Mall. Addison's papers were marked

with one of the four letters C. L. I. O. The *Essays on Milton*, the *Vision of Mirza*, and the account of *Sir Roger de Coverley's Visit to London* may be taken as specimens of Addison's prose at its best. The *Spectator* lasted for 555 numbers, continuing to appear, with one break of eighteen months during which the *Guardian* ran its course, until the end of 1714. The first sketch of Sir Roger we owe to the pen of Steele; but it was a character such as the gentle Addison loved, and Addison is certainly the painter, in full length, of the good old bachelor baronet, full of whims and oddities, simple as a child and gentle as a woman, who lives in our hearts among the most prized of the friends we make in books.

Since Addison's return from Italy, four acts of a Roman drama had been lying in his desk. Profiting by the temporary stoppage of *The Spectator*, upon the completion of the seventh volume in 1712, he set to work upon the unfinished play, and soon gave *Cato* to the stage. It was performed for the 1713 first time at Drury Lane in April 1713, to a A.D. house crammed from pit to ceiling with all the wits and statesmen of the capital. We who live in days when every buckle and shoe-tie of the wardrobe—in our better theatres at least—must pass the scrutiny of men deeply skilled in all the fashions of antiquity, smile at the incongruity of Cato in a flowered dressing-gown and a black wig that cost fifty guineas; and the brocaded Marcia in that famous hoop of Queen Anne's time, which revived in the Victorian crinoline. But Cato, thus attired, was not laughed at; for it was the theatrical fashion of the day to dress all characters in wig and hoop, exactly like those worn by the people of quality, who took snuff or flirted the fan in the resplendent box-row. A similar anachronism was committed by the old Norman romancers, who turned every hero—no matter whether he was Abraham or Alexander—into a steel-clad knight of the Middle Ages. *Cato* was a

great success. All Addison's friends were in ecstasies of delight; and even the Tories admitted that the author was a man of too pure and elevated genius to be mixed up with common political quarrels. People stood knocking at the theatre doors at noon, and for more than a month the play was performed every night. Time has greatly abated the reputation of this drama. Like Addison's own nature, it is calm and cold; undeniably excellent as a piece of literary sculpture, full of fine declamation and well-chiselled dialogue, but falling far below the natural greatness of *Macbeth* or *Julius Cæsar*. We remember Addison chiefly as the kindly genius who wrote the most charming papers of *The Spectator*; his own generation idolized him as the author of *Cato*.

Almost a year before his appointment as Secretary of State, he married the Countess-Dowager of Warwick, and took up his abode in Holland House. The union was not a happy one between the cold and polished scholar and the dashing woman of rank, who probably never found out how sweet a spirit lay beneath the ice of her husband's outward manner. The quiet, lonely man loved to escape from the gilded saloons of Holland House into the city, where he wandered through the clubs, or sat with some old friend over a bottle of wine. The same hand that wrote *Mirza* and won for *The Spectator* its honoured place on English bookshelves, is found writing glee-fully to a friend at Hamburg about the choice old hock that had set it shaking.

Addison's power lay in his pen; as a public speaker he broke down completely. This defect, coupled with the decay of his health, induced him to retire from office with a pension of £1,500 a year. Asthma rapidly weakened him; symptoms of dropsy appeared,

1719 and he soon lay upon his death-bed. "See,"

A.D. said he to his son-in-law, "how a Christian can die!" At the time of his death he had only reached his forty-eighth year.

No better close for this slight sketch could be found than the charming picture of Addison in his prime, which we owe to Thackeray.\*

“Addison wrote his papers as gaily as if he was going out for a holiday. When Steele’s *Tatler* first began his prattle, Addison, then in Ireland, caught at his friend’s notion, poured in paper after paper, and contributed the stores of his mind, the sweet fruits of his reading, the delightful gleanings of his daily observation, with a wonderful profusion, and, as it seemed, an almost endless fecundity. He was six-and-thirty years old, full and ripe. He had not worked crop after crop from his brain, manuring hastily, subsoiling indifferently, cutting and sowing and cutting again, like other luckless cultivators of letters. He had not done much as yet : a few Latin poems—graceful prolusions ; a polite book of travels ; a dissertation on medals, not very deep ; four acts of a tragedy, a great classical exercise ; and *The Campaign*, a large prize poem that won an enormous prize. But with his friend’s discovery of *The Tatler* Addison’s calling was found, and the most delightful talker in the world began to speak. . . . His writings do not show insight into or reverence for the love of women, which I take to be, one the consequence of the other. He walks about the world watching their pretty humours, fashions, follies, flirtations, rivalries, and noting them with the most charming archness. He sees them in public, in the theatre, or the assembly, or the puppet-show ; or at the toy-shop, higgling for gloves and lace ; or at the auction, battling together over a blue porcelain dragon, or a darling monster in japan ; or at church, eyeing the width of their rivals’ hoops, or the breadth of their laces, as they sweep down the aisles. Or he looks out of his window at the Garter in St. James’s Street, at Ardelia’s coach, as she blazes to the drawing-room with her coronet and six footmen ; and remembering that her father

\* See *English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*, Lecture ii.

was a Turkey merchant in the city, calculates how many sponges went to purchase her earrings, and how many drums of figs to build her coach box ; or he demurely watches behind a tree in Spring Garden as Saccharissa (whom he knows under her mask) trips out of her chair to the alley where Sir Fopling is waiting."

#### SKETCH OF WILL WIMBLE.

("SPECTATOR," NO. 108.)

As I was yesterday morning walking with Sir Roger before his house, a country fellow brought him a huge fish, which, he told him, Mr. William Wimble had caught that very morning ; and that he presented it with his service to him, and intended to come and dine with him. At the same time he delivered a letter, which my friend read to me as soon as the messenger left him.

"SIR ROGER,

"I desire you to accept of a jack, which is the best I have caught this season. I intend to come and stay with you a week, and see how the perch bite in the Black river. I observed with some concern, the last time I saw you upon the bowling-green, that your whip wanted a lash to it ; I will bring half a dozen with me that I twisted last week, which I hope will serve you all the time you are in the country. I have not been out of the saddle for six days last past, having been at Eton with Sir John's eldest son. He takes to his learning hugely.

"I am, Sir, your humble servant,

"WILL WIMBLE."

This extraordinary letter, and message that accompanied it, made me very curious to know the character and quality of the gentleman who sent them ; which I found to be as follow :—Will Wimble is younger brother to a baronet, and descended of the ancient family of the Wimbles. He is now between forty and fifty ; but being bred to no business and born to no estate, he generally lives with his eldest brother as superintendent of his game. He hunts a pack of dogs better than any man in the country, and is very famous for finding out a hare. He is extremely well versed in all the little handicrafts of an idle man. He makes a May-fly to a miracle ; and furnishes the whole country with angle-rods. As he is a good-natured, officious fellow, and very much esteemed on account of his family, he is a welcome guest at every house, and keeps up a good correspondence among all the gentlemen about him. He carries a tulip root in his pocket from one to another, or exchanges a puppy between a couple of friends, that live perhaps in the opposite sides of the country. These gentleman-like manufactures and obliging little humours make Will the darling of the country.

## CHAPTER III.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

Born 1642 A.D. . . . . Died 1727 A.D.

ALTHOUGH Newton's fame does not rest upon his contributions to English literature, we need make no apology for presenting here a brief view of the life and works of that Englishman who wrote the *Principia*, and won for his native land the fame of having given birth to one of the greatest natural philosophers the world has seen.

The hamlet of Woolsthorpe, eight miles south of Grantham, in Lincolnshire, was the birthplace of Isaac Newton. His father farmed a small estate. During his school life at Grantham and elsewhere, a remarkable taste for mechanics led him to spend his leisure in the construction of such things as model windmills and water-clocks. At nineteen he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, became ultimately a Fellow, and in 1669 succeeded Isaac Barrow as Lucasian Professor of Mathematics. Here were performed most of those splendid optical experiments which placed the science of light on new foundations. Here and at Woolsthorpe, where he sometimes spent a while, he busied himself with those investigations, resulting in his discovery of that grand law of universal gravitation which the stars obey as they wheel in huge ellipses round a central sun, and which at the same time guides the fall of the tiniest leaflet that flutters dead to the earth in the silence of an autumn wood.

In 1672 Newton was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, which was then an infant association, only ten years old. Through the studious years that followed, his great work—a Latin treatise 1687 entitled in full, *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*—was slowly but steadily growing to completeness. It was published in 1687, at



the expense of Edmund Halley, who also corrected all the proofs. In 1689 the University of Cambridge returned him as one of the members who represented her in Parliament—an honour which he enjoyed more than once. But through all these years of honour and success he remained a comparatively poor man, until, in 1696, he received his appointment as Warden of the Mint, a post worth about £600 a year. This he held for three years, when he was promoted to be Master, with a salary of more than double what he had been receiving as Warden.

In 1693 occurred that distressing accident which some believe to have shaken his mind for a time. The commonly received story—and a pretty one it is, often quoted to show how a gentle patience adorned the character of this great philosopher—runs thus: One winter morning, having shut his pet dog Diamond in his study, he came back from early chapel to find all his manuscripts upon the theory of colours, notes upon the experiments of twenty busy years, reduced to a heap of tinder. The dog had knocked down a lighted candle and set the papers in a blaze. “Ah! Diamond, Diamond, little do you know the mischief you have done,” was the only rebuke the dog received—though, as a Cambridge student writing in his diary at that very time tells us, “Every one thought that Newton would have run mad.”

High honours crowned the later life of the philosopher; of these the chief were his election in 1703 as President of the Royal Society, an office conferred on him every succeeding year until his death; and his knighthood in 1705, under the royal hand of Queen Anne. His long life, more fruitful, perhaps, in great wonders of scientific discovery than that of any other man in ancient or modern times, came to a close at Kensington in 1727, when the old man had passed his eighty-fourth year.

From the long list of Newton's works, the principal of which were written in Latin, some English publica-

tions may be selected. The first edition of his *Optics* (1704) appeared in his own tongue. A work entitled *The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended* was printed after the author's death. And more interesting than either, both as affording a favourable specimen of Newton's literary power, and a proof how deeply this great interpreter of nature's laws was fascinated by the shadowy mysteries of prophecy, is the theological treatise styled *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John*, which his executors published in 1733.

### THE LANGUAGE OF PROPHECY.

For understanding the prophecies, we are, in the first place, to acquaint ourselves with the figurative language of the prophets. This language is taken from the analogy between the world natural and an empire or kingdom considered as a world politic.

Accordingly, the whole world natural, consisting of heaven and earth, signifies the whole world politic, consisting of thrones and people; or so much of it as is considered in the prophecy. And the things in that world signify the analogous things in this. For the heavens, and the things therein, signify thrones and dignities, and those who enjoy them; and the earth, with the things thereon, the inferior people; and the lowest parts of the earth, called Hades or Hell, the lowest or most miserable part of them. Whence, ascending towards heaven, and descending to the earth, are put for rising and falling in power and honour; rising out of the earth or waters, and falling into them, for the rising up to any dignity or dominion, out of the inferior state of the people, or falling down from the same into that inferior state; descending into the lower parts of the earth, for descending to a very low and unhappy state; speaking with a faint voice out of the dust, for being in a weak and low condition; moving from one place to another, for translation from one office, dignity, or dominion to another; great earthquakes, and the shaking of heaven and earth, for the shaking of dominions, so as to distract or overthrow them; the creating a new heaven and earth, and the passing away of an old one, or the beginning and end of the world, for the rise and reign of the body politic signified thereby.

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## CHAPTER IV.

SIR RICHARD STEELE.

Born 1672 A.D. . . . . Died 1729 A.D.

WHEN Addison returned from the Continent with a head much better furnished with classic thoughts and elegant scholarship than was his purse with guineas, foremost among the few faces that presented themselves at the door of his dingy lodging in the Haymarket was the round, good-humoured countenance of an old schoolfellow and college friend, formerly Dicky Steele of the Charterhouse, but now rollicking Captain Richard Steele of Lucas's Fusiliers. The two names—Addison and Steele—are inseparably linked together, from the partnership of the two men in those periodical essays out of which have grown our *Blackwoods* and our *Cornhills*, our *Edinburghs* and our *Quarterlies*.

Steele, the nephew of a man who acted as secretary or clerk to the Duke of Ormond, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, was born in March 1672 in Dublin. During his schooldays at the Charterhouse in London he was the companion of Addison, whom he afterwards joined at Oxford, his name first appearing in the books of Merton College in 1691. Leaving Oxford without a degree, he enlisted, much against the wishes of his friends, as a private in the Life Guards, dazzled by the splendour of the richly laced scarlet coats of that corps. His agreeable manners and frank, open joviality won him many friends. Ormond, in whose troop he rode, obtained an ensignship for him; he became secretary to Colonel Lord Cutts; and ultimately was made a captain in Lucas's Fusiliers.

During the life he spent about town with his brother officers he wrote and published a devotional work, called *The Christian Hero*, by which he intended to correct his errors and force himself to pull up in time.

But his only reward was the laughter of the town ; for the idea of a soldier, who could never resist the attractions of the Rose Tavern or the delight of beating the watch at midnight, appearing in print as a religious character, seemed to have in it something irresistibly comic. Yet for the time Steele was sincere in his intentions of reform. He soon, however, appeared as an author in a different line. Three comedies from his pen—*The Funeral*, *The Lying Lover*, and *The Tender Husband*—were performed between 1702 and 1705. The failure of the last for a time drove Steele from the stage. A greater task than the writing of second-rate plays was in store for his pen.

Between the failure of *The Tender Husband* and the first issue of *The Tatler*, Steele married his second wife, ("dear Prue"), Mary Scurlock of Caermarthen-shire, who, by preserving some four hundred let- 1707  
ters from her husband, written chiefly in taverns A.D.  
and coffee-houses, has enabled us to form truer ideas of the man Dick Steele than we could get from any other source. There we have displayed the inner life of the improvident fellow, whose dissipation does not sour the sweetness of his nature, who is often detained from home by some mythical business, and softens his announcement of delay by a little present to his wife of tea or walnuts, or a guinea or two, when his purse is not in its normal condition of emptiness. He held at this time the appointment of Gazetteer, which he afterwards exchanged for the post of Commissioner of Stamps. The former office, by giving him an early command of foreign news, enabled him to commence the publication of *The Tatler* in 1709.

The 12th of April in that year marks the opening of a great era in English literature—the birth of the first English periodical worthy of the name. Three times a week, on the post-days, this 1709  
penny sheet came out, and was scattered A.D.  
through town and country. After a while Addison lent his aid to his old schoolfellow, and when

*The Tatler* had told his tale to a second New Year, after a short silence of two months the greater *Spectator* arose to fill the vacant space. Here it was that Addison's genius shone in its fullest lustre ; and though Steele's good-natured wit welled out as fresh and natural as ever in the papers of *The Spectator*, he suffers somewhat by contrast with his greater friend. Among other gems of this classic, we owe to Steele's pen the first sketch of the members who composed the Spectator Club. Addison has made Sir Roger all his own, yet Steele certainly first placed the portrait upon canvas.

We have already called Steele's wit fresh and natural. It came with no stinted flow. He wrote as he lived, freely and carelessly, scattering the coinage of his brain, as he did his guineas, with an unsparing hand. All who read his papers, or his letters to "dear Prue," cannot help seeing the good heart of the rattle-brain shining out in every line. The most puritanical can forgive his tippling in taverns and his unthinking extravagance, in consideration of the loving touch with which he handles the foibles of his neighbours, and the mirth without bitterness that flows from his gentle pen.

Between the seventh and eighth volumes of *The Spectator*, *The Guardian* appeared, Steele and Addison being still the chief contributors. Steele's entry upon parliamentary life, as member for Stockbridge, relaxed his efforts as an essayist. Though he was afterwards concerned in other periodicals—*The Englishman*, *The Reader*, etc.—neither his purse nor his reputation won much by them.

It was a stirring time in politics, and Steele was not the man to be behindhand in the fray. His pamphlet, *The Crisis*, raised so great a storm against him that he was expelled from the House of Commons for libel. The death of Queen Anne, however, produced a change. Under the new dynasty Dick became Sir Richard Steele, Governor of the Royal Comedians, Surveyor of the Royal Stables at Hampton Court, and Member of

Parliament for Boroughbridge, in Yorkshire. In the House he spoke often and well ; at home in Bloomsbury or elsewhere he wrote spicy articles, gave splendid dinners—running up heavy bills, which he always meant to pay, but never did. Addison, who had lent his easy-going friend £1,000, is said to have paid himself by selling Steele's country-house at Hampton, furniture and all, putting his own money in his pocket, and handing the balance to poor Dick, who, no doubt, was very glad to get a little ready cash for the duns that knocked daily at the door. Steele's very successful comedy, *The Conscious Lovers*, acted at Drury Lane in 1722, brought him a large sum ; but even that could do little to melt the millstone of debt hanging round the unfortunate author's neck. His diffi- 1729  
culties increased. He withdrew for retrench- A.D.  
ment to his wife's estate at Llangunnor, in Wales. There he breathed his last in 1729. His last years were spent in reasonable affluence.

## ORIGINAL SKETCH OF SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY.

(“SPECTATOR,” NO. 2.)

The first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of an ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behaviour ; but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humour creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy ; and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town, he lives in Soho Square. It is said he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was kicked in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman—had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked bully Dawson in a public coffee-house for calling him youngster. But, being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half ; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself, and never dressed afterward. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry



humours, he tells us has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour, that he is rather beloved than esteemed. His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess love to him, and the young men are glad of his company. When he comes into a house he calls the servants by their names, and talks all the way up stairs to a visit. I must not omit, that Sir Roger is a justice of the quorum; that he fills the chair at a quarter-session with great abilities, and three months ago gained universal applause by explaining a passage in the game Act.

## CHAPTER V.

ALEXANDER POPE.

Born 1688 A.D. . . . . Died 1744 A.D.

PRINCE of the Artificial school of English poetry stands Alexander Pope, whose brilliant and versatile powers were best displayed in *The Rape of the Lock* and *The Dunciad*.

Pope's father was a well-to-do linen-draper in the Strand, who gave up business in disgust at the shadow which the Revolution had flung upon the Roman Catholic Church, to which he belonged, and retiring to Binfield, on the skirts of Windsor Forest, locked up his fortune of £20,000 in a box, from which he took the needful guineas as often as his purse ran low. Banks were then in their infancy; and the seizure which Charles the Second had made of the public funds was too fresh in remembrance to make a government investment seem safe. His delicate boy, 1688 Alexander, born in 1688, passed under some A.D. priestly tutors, but never enjoyed a college training. Before he was twelve the little invalid wrote an *Ode to Solitude*, marked with a thoughtfulness beyond his years; and after loitering for four summers longer among the picturesque woodlands near his home—spending summer and winter

alike in a constant round of studies, rambling but deep—he boldly embraced the perilous vocation of a poet, and at sixteen began to haunt the London coffee-houses in that character. Admiration of Dryden was the grand passion of his boyhood; and when the great monarch of letters, seated in his easy-chair at Will's, was one day pointed out by a good-natured friend to the pale, wistful boy, who had already drunk deep of the old man's poetry, we can well imagine the occasion marked with bright red letters in the childish memory. From admiration to imitation, Pope himself says, is but a step. His versification was moulded after Dryden's "full-resounding line."

Wycherley, a battered old literary rake, was young Pope's first ally; but in the coffee-room at Will's or Button's—headquarters of the author-craft—the boyish writer of *The Pastorals*, which were as yet only handed about in manuscript, got many a kind shake of the hand and hearty slap on the shoulder from greater and better men than old Wycherley.

The poet soared to higher fame, when, in 1711, his celebrated *Essay on Criticism*, begun two years earlier, issued from the press. This performance, wonderful for a youth of twenty-one, contains 1711 many fine passages. The well-known lines, A.D. illustrating the agreement of sound with sense, afford a striking specimen of the ease with which Pope wields his native speech. Then followed a sacred poem, *The Messiah*, which appeared in No. 378 of *The Spectator*; and not long after came the pathetic verses, *An Elegy on an Unfortunate Lady*.

The theft of a lady's ringlet by her lover produced the happiest effort of Pope's poetic skill. Lord Petre was the delinquent, and Miss Arabella Fermor the injured girl. The trick having led to a coolness between the families, Pope set to work, inspired by the wish to reconcile the estrangement by a hearty laugh. Thus came into being that epic in miniature, *The Rape of the Lock*, which presents the most brilliant specimen

of the mock-heroic style to be found in English verse.\* We may read the reign of Anne through in many books of history without receiving anything like so clear and vivid an impression of what 1713 A.D. was then fashionable life, as we derive from the five cantos that tell the woes of Belinda.

The *machinery* of the poem, as old-fashioned critics call the introduction of supernatural beings into the action of the plot, Pope took from the Rosicrucian doctrine that the four elements are filled with sylphs, gnomes, nymphs, and salamanders. Most comically does this airy byplay come to act upon the progress of the story, reaching perhaps the climax of its humour in the idea of a poor sylph who was so eager to save the imperilled lock that she gets between the scissors blades and is snipped in two. After a fierce battle, in which Belinda, armed with a deadly bodkin, leads the van, the severed tress flies up to take its place among the stars.

In *The Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard* we find the poet wasting his pathos upon a hackneyed theme. *The Temple of Fame*, a fine piece of descriptive writing, founded on Chaucer's *House of Fame*, though written earlier, was published about this period of his life.

At twenty-five Pope undertook his most extensive, most profitable, yet assuredly not his greatest work. "It is a pretty poem, Mr. Pope; but you must not call it Homer," was the terse and true remark of the great scholar Bentley upon the volumes sent him by the poet. Many hundred verses were written on backs of letters and chance scraps of paper, sometimes at the rate of fifty lines a day. Begun in 1712 and finished in 1725, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* together, after deducting the cost of some help which he got in the notes and the translation of the latter, brought the poet a handsome fortune. Not sixty years before, a blind old man in the same great city had sold the

\* The two original cantos were written in 1712, but in 1714 the poem appeared in its present shape.

greatest epic of modern days for £18. Pope, whose poetic fame grows pale before the splendour of Milton's genius, as the stars die out before the sun, pocketed more than £8,000 for a clever translation. Like Dryden translating Virgil, Pope did little more than reproduce the sense of Homer's verse in smooth and neatly balanced English couplets, leaving the spirit behind in the glorious rough old Greek that tumbles on the ear like the roar of a winter sea.

With the money thus obtained Pope had the good sense to buy a villa at Twickenham, standing on five acres of land. The hours which were not given to his desk were spent in laying out his flower-beds, and adorning his famous grotto with such things as red spar, Cornwall diamonds, Spanish silver, and lava from Vesuvius. Here, by the Thames, his later years were spent ; here Swift, Bolingbroke, Gay, Arbuthnot, and a host of the most brilliant men of the day, paid him frequent visits ; and it is at least one tender trait in the character of a poet who has not had very many kind sayings lavished on him, that here his old mother found a warm welcome in her declining days.

Pope's love-making was as artificial as his verse, but not so successful. His professed passion for Lady Mary Montagu, after many rebuffs, suddenly changed its hue. So bitter, indeed, did the little man's remarks grow after his repulse, that the lady used to call her *quondam* swain "The wicked wasp of Twickenham."

Of course Pope and Addison often met. When the poet first came to town, a boy and little known, he dandied attendance for a good while upon the great Oxford scholar. He wrote an admirable prologue for the tragedy of *Cato*. But gradually a coolness arose between these celebrated men. Some think that Addison was jealous of Pope's brightening fame ; others attribute it to Pope's peevish temper, and to grave political differences. Whatever may have been

its cause, the estrangement grew to a crisis when Pope issued a spiteful pamphlet against old John Dennis, who had published certain *Remarks on the Tragedy of Cato*. Addison, vexed at the tone of the reply, although the lance was broken in his own quarrel, hastily said that if he answered the *Remarks* at all he would do it as a gentleman should. This Pope never forgave; and the gulf grew wider when Tickell, Addison's close friend, began a translation of Homer, which seemed to the suspicious eyes of Pope a wilful rivalry of his great work, secretly done by Addison, but put out for appearance' sake under Tickell's name.

The *Odyssey* and the editing of *Shakespeare* occupied the pen of Pope for some years after his removal to Twickenham in 1718. His weakly frame could not stand the wear and tear of city life, as authors then lived.

The publication of his *Miscellanies* (1727-32), in which Swift also took a share, brought round the heads of the offending authors an angry swarm of scribblers, buzzing like wasps whose nest has been rashly invaded. Then the real power of the crippled poet appeared. Seizing each wretched insect with the firm hold of a skilful entomologist, he ruthlessly pinned it, in the full gaze of the world's scorn, on the sheets of the immortal *Dunciad*. There the unfortunate creatures still hang and wriggle; and 1728 A.D. there, while English books are read, they shall remain. This epic of "Dunces" (hence its name) celebrates the accession of a king—at first Shakespearean Theobald, but in a later edition dramatic Cibber—to the vacant throne of Dullness, and describes the sports of authors, booksellers, and critics before the newly-crowned monarch. The fourth and last book is terribly severe upon the trifling education of the day, the "black blockade" of college dons suffering not a little from the satiric lash. The literary profession did not recover for many a day from the onslaught of this bitter pen. To starve in a Grub

Street garret became, in the opinion of the public, the sure destiny of every man who took to letters for a livelihood ; and even now, when poets sometimes get their guinea a line, the name has not altogether lost, in the minds of many an honest merchant or yeoman, its old associations with threadbare coats, a tendency to drink, and a general lack of half-crowns.

The *Dunciad*, first published in 1728, was enlarged in the following year ; and in 1742 was completed by the addition of the fourth book. The dethronement of Theobald to make room for Cibber proved a great blunder ; for the satiric lines which pierced poor Theobald to the bone fell blunt and pointless off a man of totally different character.

A frequent visitor at the Twickenham villa was Lord Bolingbroke, well known as a politician, a libertine, and a sceptic, and under his influence was written *The Essay on Man*. In no poem of Pope's is his *gnomic* and epigrammatic quality so apparent, and every second line has become a familiar quotation.

Graceful and flowing *Imitations of Horace* were among Pope's latest works. Through all this poet's life of fifty-six years he was delicate and frail. The wonder is that soul and body kept together so long. When he got up in the morning, he had to be sewed into stiff canvas stays, without which he could not stand erect ; his thin body was wrapped in fur and flannel ; and his meagre legs required three pairs of stockings to give them a respectable look. After he grew bald, which happened early in life, a velvet cap became his favourite head-dress. On company days he wore a black velvet coat, a tie-wig, and a little sword. When he stayed with a friend, all the servants were kept in a bustle to answer Mr. Pope's never-ceasing calls. The house was roused up at night to make him coffee, or bring him paper, lest he might lose a happy thought. Poor fellow ! his fussiness was a foible easily pardoned ; and as to his temper, when we remember that his life—to use his own sad words



—was “one long disease,” we can overlook the acid and the sting in remembrance of the pain. The little spider—so he describes his own meagre figure—that could spin webs of verse so brilliant and so deadly lived with simple elegance upon £800 a year, paring his housekeeping with perhaps too close a hand, but cherishing to the last beneath his kindly roof the mother whom he loved so well.

His death took place at Twickenham on  
1744 May 30, 1744. Asthma and other diseases had  
A.D. so worn away his strength that the moment  
of his decease could not be perceived.

*Pope's Letters*, first published, as he tried to make the world believe, against his will, are well worth the reading; but his finest piece of prose is the *Preface* to his edition of Shakespeare. Two of his well-known works have not yet been named—*Windsor Forest* and the *Dying Christian to his Scul*. The former, bright with hues caught in woodland rambles, presents glowing pictures of the scenery and sports which he had witnessed in the green glades of Windsor during the days of his dreamy, studious boyhood. The latter, perhaps the feeblest effort of his pen, is a stiff and puerile rendering of the Emperor Hadrian's famous “*Animula vagula, blandula.*”

#### FROM “THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.”

For lo ! the board with cups and spoons is crowned,  
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round :  
On shining altars of Japan they raise  
The silver lamp ; the fiery spirits blaze :  
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,  
While China's earth receives the smoking tide ;  
At once they gratify their scent and taste,  
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.  
Straight hover round the fair her airy band :  
Some, as she sipped, the fuming liquor fanned ;  
Some o'er her lap their careful plumes displayed,  
Trembling and conscious of the rich brocade.  
Coffee (which makes the politician wise,  
And see through all things with his half-shut eyes)  
Sent up in vapours to the baron's brain  
New stratagems the radiant lock to gain.

Ah ! cease, rash youth ; desist ere 'tis too late ;  
 Fear the just gods, and think of Scylla's fate !  
 Changed to a bird, and sent to flit in air,  
 She dearly paid for Nisus' injured hair !

But when to mischief mortals bend their will,  
 How soon they find fit instruments of ill !  
 Just then, Clarissa drew, with tempting grace,  
 A two-edged weapon from her shining case ;  
 So ladies, in romance, assist their knight,  
 Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.  
 He takes the gift with reverence, and extends  
 The little engine on his fingers' ends ;  
 This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,  
 As o'er the fragrant steams she bent her head.  
 Swift to the lock a thousand sprites repair,  
 A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair :  
 And thrice they twitched the diamond in her ear ;  
 Thrice she looked back, and thrice the foe drew near.  
 Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought  
 The close recesses of the virgin's thought :  
 As on the nosegay in her breast reclined,  
 He watched the ideas rising in her mind,  
 Sudden he viewed, in spite of all her art,  
 An earthly lover lurking at her heart.  
 Amazed, confused, he found his power expired,  
 Resigned to fate, and with a sigh retired.

The peer now spreads the glittering forfex wide  
 To enclose the lock ; now joins it, to divide.  
 E'en then, before the fatal engine closed,  
 A wretched Sylph too fondly interposed ;  
 Fate urged the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain  
 (But airy substance soon unites again),  
 The meeting points the sacred hair dis sever  
 From the fair head, for ever, and for ever !

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## CHAPTER VI.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

Born 1667 A.D. . . . . Died 1745 A.D.

THE life of Swift is a great tragedy. Through all the acts a dark genius moves, an intellectual Saul, towering by head and shoulders above his fellows, and possessed of an evil spirit, which does not quite abandon its wretched prey even when a pall of darkness settles on his ruined mind, and that dreadful silence of three

years begins to unfold itself between a bitter life and the slumber of the grave.

Swift was a Dublin man by birth, being born there in Hoey's Court in 1667. But his parents and his ancestors were English. His father, a mere bird of passage in Dublin, where he had come in the hope of getting some practice as a lawyer, died seven months before Jonathan's birth. At his uncle's expense he went to Kilkenny School, and then to Trinity College, Dublin; but in neither did he distinguish himself above the average run of students. Indeed, his degree of B.A. was of the lowest class, a narrow escape from the disgrace of being plucked, which roused him to studious resolves. And to the steady industry of the next seven years he owed almost all the learning he ever had.

Dependence had all this while been burning like an acrid poison into the proud boy's soul. But his lessons in the hard school of adversity were not yet over. His uncle's death in 1688 flung him upon the world, and forced him to seek a shelter at Moor Park, in the household of Sir William Temple, with whom his mother was slightly connected. Here for many years Swift continued to eat bitter bread; waiting and looking out into the dim future for the time when he could break his chains, and smite tenfold for every stripe he had received. Standing midway between the elegantly-selfish Sir William, who wrote and gardened and quoted the classics, and the liveried sneerers of the servants' hall, poor Swift gnawed at his own heart in disdainful silence, writhing helplessly under the lofty chidings of his Honour, and the vulgar insolence of his Honour's own man. We can well imagine the working of the swarthy features, the deadly concentrated light of the terrible blue eye, and the convulsive starts of the ungainly limbs, as those continual streams of petty scorn and malice trickled on the spirit of the morbid and sensitive youth, who felt them like molten lead, yet could not or dared not

take revenge. At Temple's, Swift met King William, who, walking in the garden, showed him how the Dutch cut their asparagus, and offered to make him a captain of horse. One cannot help wishing that Swift had accepted the troop. We should not, most probably, have had *Gulliver's Travels* on our shelves, but the sabring of French dragoons might have acted as a safety-valve to the poisonous humours which so many years of bondage had generated in his breast ; and the red coat would not have burned him to the bone, as the priest's cassock did, scorching him as the poisoned shirt scorched Hercules.

In an evil hour Swift, who had already graduated as M.A. at Oxford, crossed to Dublin, took holy orders, and became prebend of Kilroot, near Belfast, at £100 a year. But the life of a country parson was even worse misery to Swift than the wretched- 1693  
ness of Moor Park. Thither, accordingly, he A.D.  
returned, humbling himself in the dust before the great baronet. Then he became involved in his mysterious love affair with Esther Johnson, an intimate of Sir William's family, better known by Swift's pet name of Stella, whose black curls and eyes threw their spells around him.

Let us glance forward along the course of this strange and seemingly unfinished life, over which, from its very beginning, the black shadow of final insanity cast a gloom, and see how the sad story of Swift's attachments comes to a close. Stella he seems to have loved deeply, but not so well that he could bend his gigantic ambition to a public marriage with her. By-and-by, before he became Dean of St. Patrick's in Dublin, a girl named Esther Vanhomrigh fell in love with him. This lady was the unhappy Vanessa of his verse. The two hearts, thus moved with a strange tenderness for one who had little of the amiable in his nature, were kept dangling round him by the cruel genius, like silly moths round a lamp, until one after the other they were burned to ashes. It is said

that Swift and Stella were secretly married in the Deanery garden; but the unfeeling man would not avow the union to the world, and she sank into the grave unacknowledged.

The death of Temple in 1699 sent Swift to Ireland as the chaplain of Lord Berkeley. He soon became rector of Agher, and vicar of Laracor and Rathbeggin, in Meath. But in his thirty-fourth year he took his

place in the ranks of political penmen by  
1701 writing a pamphlet on the Whig side. His

A.D. pen was the lever by which he meant to raise

Jonathan Swift to the pinnacle of clerical or political greatness. It certainly won for him the adoration of a country, and one of the highest niches in the temple of our literature; but it could not raise a mitre to his head.

One of his three great works was the extraordinary *Tale of a Tub*, which was published, according to the author's statement, in order to divert the

1704 followers of Hobbes, author of the *Leviathan*,

A.D. from injuring the vessel of the State, just as

sailors were wont to fling out a tub in order to turn aside a whale from his threatened dash upon their ship. The *Leviathan*, he says, "tosses and plays with all schemes of religion and government, whereof many are hollow, and dry, and empty, and noisy, and wooden, and given to rotation." Three brothers—Peter, Martin, and Jack—receive from their dying father coats, which, if carefully kept clean, will last them all their lives. As the fashions change, they add to the simple coat shoulder-knots, gold lace, silver fringes, embroidery of Indian figures, twisting the meaning of their father's will so as to give a seeming sanction to these innovations. Peter (evidently the apostle of that name, here taken to represent the Roman Catholic Church) locks up the will, assumes the style of a lord, and wears his coat proudly as it is. His brothers, stealing a copy of the document, leave the great house, and begin to reform their coats.

Martin (Luther) goes to work cautiously in stripping off the adornments, and leaves some of the embroidery alone lest he may injure the cloth. But Jack (Calvin) in his hot zeal plucks off all at once, and in so doing splits the seams, and tears away great pieces of the coat. Thus does Swift depict the corruptions of early Christianity, and the results of the Reformation, in a satire of uncommon power and strange, mad drollery. His sympathies are all with Martin, and Peter gets off better than Jack.

Disappointed in his hopes of preferment, Swift deserted from the Whig ranks, and soon his shot began to plough through the lines he had left. We cannot attempt to name the bitter and caustic pamphlets that were hurled by the renegade against his former friends. But his new allies dared not make a bishop of the man who had written *The Tale of a Tub*. The Deanery of St. Patrick's, Dublin, received in 1713, was the utmost they could do for him. 1713 And a short time afterwards the Tory govern- A.D. ment fell, leaving no resource to the disappointed Dean but to hide himself and his baffled hopes in Dublin. To a great and troubled spirit such as Swift's, exile from the centre of conflict was a doom little better than burial alive.

For about six years he lived quietly, but not contentedly, in Dublin, employing his pen on various subjects. Then the rage against England, which had been festering in his heart through all these years, burst out. A pamphlet appeared advocating strongly the use of Irish manufactures in Ireland—undoubtedly a laudable work, if we could forget that it sprang more from hatred to England than love to Ireland. It took the fancy of the Irish people—a fancy which was kindled into flames of enthusiastic admiration when the same pen produced in a Dublin newspaper a series of *Letters signed M. B. Drapier*, in which the Irish were warned against exchanging their gold and silver for the bad halfpence and farthings of Wolver-



hampton Wood, who had obtained a patent empowering him to coin £180,000 worth of copper for circulation in Ireland. No one would take the bad money; all attempts to bring the writer to trial were unsuccessful, though everybody knew that the Drapier and the Dean were the same man. Swift became the idol of the nation, possessed of unbounded influence over the rabble. "If," said he to an archbishop who blamed him for kindling a riotous flame—"if I had lifted up my finger, they would have torn you to pieces."

Who has not read *Gulliver's Travels*? and what young reader has not been startled to learn, when its fascinating pages were devoured, that it is a great political and social satire, filled with the mad freaks of a furious, fantastic, and cankered genius. Greatness and wisdom mark every page of the wonderful tale. The dwarfs of Lilliput, the giants of Brobdingnag, the philosophers of Laputa, the magicians of Glubdubdrib, afford much amusement, although we can never get entirely rid of the harsh and iron laugh of the narrator, whose mockery chills us as we read. Of the last voyage we may shortly say that none but a savage could have imagined its events, and none but savage minds can fully enjoy such revolting pictures. Hatred of men has never, in any age or land, so polluted the current of a literature as when Swift committed to paper his foul and monstrous conception of the Yahoo. The strange, wild book, published anonymously in 1726, had great success, and was read by high and low.

Long ago, sitting over his books on a garden-seat at Moor Park, he had caught a giddiness and deafness, which afflicted him at intervals through all his life. The attacks became more frequent after Stella's death. His temper, always sullen, grew ferocious. Yet he continued to write until 1736. Avarice and his savage moods thinned the circle of his visitors by quick degrees; and when deafness shut him out from



ROBERT BURNS.

*From the portrait by Naysmith in the National Portrait  
Gallery, London.*

*(Photo by Walker.)*



the world of human talk, his mind, flung in upon itself, darkened into madness. What a terrific picture ! the lonely, gray-haired lunatic hurrying for ten hours a day up and down his gloomy chamber, as if it were a cage and he a chained wild beast ; never sitting even to eat, but devouring, as he walked, the plateful of cut meat which his keeper left for him at meal-time. Such were Swift's last sad days. Stella was well avenged. After three years of almost total silence, he died in October 1745. A pile of black marble marks his burial-place in St. Patrick's ; but a more striking monument of the wrecked genius stands in one of Dublin streets—Swift's Hospital for idiots and incurable madmen, for the building and endowment of which he bequeathed nearly all his fortune.

Swift's fame rests on his magnificent prose. He seems to have hated foreign words as he hated men, and has given us such nervous, bare, unadorned, genuine English as we get from no other writer. But he wrote verses too—coarse, strong, and graphic. *Morning, The City Shower, a Rhapsody on Poetry, and Verses on my Own Death* are amongst his best poetic compositions.

#### GULLIVER'S BOATING IN BROBDINGNAG.

The queen, who often used to hear me talk of my sea-voyages, and took all occasions to divert me when I was melancholy, asked me whether I understood how to handle a sail or an oar, and whether a little exercise of rowing might not be convenient for my health. I answered, that I understood both very well ; for although my proper employment had been to be surgeon or doctor to the ship, yet often upon a pinch I was forced to work like a common mariner. But I could not see how this could be done in their country, where the smallest wherry was equal to a first-rate man-of-war among us, and such a boat as I could manage would never live in any of their rivers. Her majesty said, if I would contrive a boat, her own joiner should make it, and she would provide a place for me to sail in. The fellow was an ingenious workman, and, by my instructions, in ten days finished a pleasure-boat, with all its tackling, able conveniently to hold eight Europeans. When it was finished, the queen was so delighted, that she ran with it in her lap to the king, who ordered it to be put in a cistern full of water with me in it by way of trial ; where I could not manage my two sculls, or little oars, for want of room. But the queen had before contrived another

project. She ordered the joiner to make a wooden trough of three hundred feet long, fifty broad, and eight deep, which being well pitched, to prevent leaking, was placed on the floor along the wall in an outer room of the palace. It had a cock near the bottom to let out the water, when it began to grow stale; and two servants could easily fill it in half an hour. Here I often used to row for my own diversion, as well as that of the queen and her ladies, who thought themselves well entertained with my skill and agility. Sometimes I would pull up my sail, and then my business was only to steer, while the ladies gave me a gale with their fans; and when they were weary, some of the pages would blow my sail forward with their breath; while I showed my art by steering starboard or larboard, as I pleased. When I had done, Glumdalclitch always carried back my boat into her closet, and hung it on a nail to dry.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### OTHER WRITERS OF THE SIXTH ERA.

#### POETS.

NICHOLAS ROWE, born in 1674 in Bedfordshire, was educated for the law, his father's profession. His plays, of which the chief are *The Fair Penitent* and *Jane Shore*, won for the young lawyer the notice of the great. His social qualities endeared him to his literary friends. Upon the accession of George the First he was made Poet-laureate, and held other more lucrative public offices. Rowe died in 1718, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Pope, Swift, and Addison were prominent among his friends. He is also remembered as the first editor of Shakespeare worthy of the name.

ISAAC WATTS, born in 1674 at Southampton, became at twenty-four assistant minister of an Independent congregation in Mark Lane, London. But his weak health prevented him from retaining this position. The last thirty-six years of his long life were spent at Theobalds, under the roof of Sir Thomas Abney, his warmest friend. Here he wrote the beautifully simple *Hymns*, which have made his name familiar to childhood. His works on *Logic* and

*The Improvement of the Mind* show that he could write English prose also with clearness and force. He died in 1748.

AMBROSE PHILIPS, born in 1675 in Shropshire, received his education at St. John's, Cambridge. He was the real original *Namby Pamby*—a nickname which was given to him on account of the complimentary versicles he was fond of addressing to his friends and their babies. His *Pastorals*, though much praised in his own day, have not held their place in public favour. Philips was bitterly satirized by Pope. He died in 1749.

THOMAS PARNELL, of English descent, but born in Dublin in 1679, became Archdeacon of Clogher, and, through the influence of his friend Swift, vicar of Finglass. He lived chiefly in London. *The Hermit* is the poem for which he now lives among the great names of English literature. He died and was buried at Chester in 1718.

THOMAS TICKELL, one of Addison's most intimate friends, born near Carlisle in 1686, wrote the pathetic ballad of *Colin and Lucy*. He undertook that translation of the first book of the *Iliad* which deepened Pope's feeling towards Addison into something akin to hatred. Tickell served Addison as secretary, and in 1724 went to Ireland as Secretary to the Lords-Justices. He died at Bath in 1740. He wrote an allegorical poem called *Kensington Gardens*, besides many papers in the *Spectator* and the *Guardian*.

ALLAN RAMSAY, who was born in 1686 and died in 1758, was a native of Leadhills, a Lanarkshire village. Most of his long life was passed in Edinburgh, where he was a wig-maker, and then a bookseller. His circulating library was the first that was established in Scotland. The small quaint house, on the slope of the Castle Hill, called Ramsay Lodge, was his residence during his last twelve years. Allan's shop was a favourite lounge of the poet Gay when he came to Edinburgh. Ramsay's pastoral drama, *The*



*Gentle Shepherd*, first published in 1725 and written in the strong broad Doric of North Britain, is the finest existing specimen of its class. His songs, too, have endeared him to the Scottish heart. *The Yellow-haired Laddie* and *Lochaber no More* are two of his most popular lyrics.

JOHN GAY, a Devonshire man of good family, born in 1685, was at first apprenticed to a silk-mercant in the Strand. But his wishes soared higher, especially after he took up the poet's pen. As domestic secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth he found more leisure for writing, and rapidly brought out several poems and dramatic pieces. For about two months he held the position of Secretary to the Embassy at Hanover. But he was not fitted for business of any kind, and found his proper sphere when he was permitted to nestle down in a corner of the Queensberry household as a humble friend and domestic joker. "There," says Thackeray, "he was lapped in cotton, and had his plate of chicken and his saucer of cream, and frisked, and barked, and wheezed, and grew fat, and so ended." *The Shepherd's Week*, a series of comic pastorals; *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London*; and *The Fan*, in three books, are among his works. But his fame rests chiefly on his artless, pleasant *Fables*, his song of *Black-eyed Susan*, and his *Beggar's Opera*. Gay died in 1732.

EDWARD YOUNG was nearly sixty years of age when he published his *Night Thoughts*, a poem which gained for its author a great reputation in his own day, and for long afterwards. He was born at Upham in Hampshire in 1683. After completing his education at Oxford he became a man of society in London, and a court poet. Having entered the Church, he obtained from his college a living in Hertfordshire, which he held till his death in 1765. He wrote many other poems, including *The Universal Passion* and the tragedy of *Revenge*.

RICHARD SAVAGE, born about 1697 in London, is

said to have been the illegitimate child of noble parents. His history is a miserable tale. Drink and debauchery plunged him lower and lower, until in 1743 he was found dead in his bed in Bristol Jail, where he lay a prisoner for debt. *The Wanderer* is his principal work.

ROBERT BLAIR, born in 1699 at Edinburgh, became at thirty-two minister of Athelstaneford, in East Lothian. Before that event he had commenced his fine blank-verse poem, *The Grave*, but it was not published till 1743. He died in 1746.

JOHN DYER, painter, poet, and clergyman, was born in Caermarthenshire about 1700, and died in 1758. He wrote *Grongar Hill*, *The Ruins of Rome*, and *The Fleece*—works which entitle him to a high place among descriptive poets.

#### PROSE WRITERS.

ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, Earl of Shaftesbury, was born in London in 1671. In fine, sonorous, and elaborate English he discussed the great themes of metaphysics and ethics. His belief in a "moral sense, by which virtue and vice—things naturally and fundamentally distinct—are discriminated, and at once approved of or condemned, without reference to the self-interest of him who judges," is the salient point in his philosophical system. His works, published in three volumes, bear the name, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times*. He died at Naples in 1713.

SAMUEL CLARKE, Newton's friend, was born at Norwich in 1675. A graduate of Cambridge, he entered the Church, in which he held important livings both in his native town and in Westminster. His works are chiefly on such theological and metaphysical subjects as *The Being and Attributes of God*, *Natural and Revealed Religion*, *The Immortality of the Soul*, and *The Trinity*. This learned and worthy man died in 1729.

HENRY ST. JOHN, Viscount Bolingbroke, born at Battersea in 1678, received his education at Eton, not at Oxford. He was noted as a cold-hearted profligate, as an unfortunate politician, and as a writer of much eloquence, but of unfixed and shifting principles, both in religion and philosophy. In the reign of Anne he was Secretary of State. But the accession of the Guelphs drove him to France, where he joined the Pretender. A pardon enabled him in 1723 to return to England; but he was obliged again to retire across the Straits. During those days of exile in France some of his chief works were written: *Reflections on Exile*, *Letters on the Study of History*, and a *Letter on the True Use of Retirement*. He afterwards wrote, at Battersea, *Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism* and the *Idea of a Patriot King*. From Bolingbroke, Pope got much of that ethical system unfolded in the *Essay on Man*. Bolingbroke died in 1751.

GEORGE BERKELEY, made Bishop of Cloyne in 1734, was then fifty years of age. He was born in 1685 at Dysert Castle, in the county Kilkenny. He is noted among our metaphysical writers especially for his *Theory of Vision*, and those works which embody and display his *theory of ideas*. He emphasized the doctrine that things, so far as they have any meaning for us, exist in our minds only. Berkeley died at Oxford in 1753. His English is simple, scholar-like, and clear.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU, daughter of the Duke of Kingston, was born in 1689, and at twenty-two was married to Edward Wortley (later Wortley Montagu). Her residence for nearly two years at Constantinople, where her husband was English ambassador, gave her an opportunity of seeing life in many varieties, and her graceful, graphic *Letters*, descriptive of travel and foreign fashions, abound with light and most agreeable reading. Her amusement at Pope's silly declaration of love for her threw her into a hearty burst of laughter, which made the little poet ever afterwards her mortal foe. She died in 1762, and her *Letters*

were first printed in the following year. She conferred a great benefit on England by the introduction of inoculation for the small-pox, a practice she had noticed among the Turkish poor.

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, Earl of Chesterfield, born in 1694, wrote a series of *Letters* to his son, which had a great sale in the years succeeding the author's death. They are just such letters as a polished and heartless man of fashion would write, and depict anything but the true notion of gentlemanhood. A brilliant polish on the surface would atone, according to the maxims of Chesterfield, for any rottenness, however great, within. He died in 1773.

HENRY HOME, born in 1696, assumed the title of Lord Kames when in 1752 he ascended the Scottish bench. The work for which his name is best known is that entitled *The Elements of Criticism*, in which he founds the art upon the principles of human nature. He wrote other metaphysical and several legal works. He died in 1782.

## SEVENTH ERA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

FROM THE PUBLICATION OF "PAMELA" IN 1740 A.D.  
TO THE DEATH OF JOHNSON IN 1784 A.D.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### LITERARY LIFE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

As we look back upon that remarkable era of our literature which runs through Queen Anne's reign and far into that of George the First, we see two phases of author life—the one rich and brilliant; the other dark, poor, and wretched. There are no middle tints—nothing but bright light and deepest shadow. If an author made a hit, up he went to the very top of the tree, where the golden fruit grew and the sunlight of court favour played round him; if he failed to attract attention, there was nothing for even the most hard-working hack but to plod on with as much hope as he could muster.

But the artificial system of encouragement by which men who wrote well became, without the possession of other qualifications, ambassadors, commissioners, surveyors, or secretaries, did not last long. Walpole, a man who cared little for books and less for their writers, came into office, and almost at once the whole literary profession sank, with a few exceptions, into indigence and obscurity. The exceptions can easily be counted. Pope had made enough by his *Homer* to live snugly at Twickenham; so he was independent

of Walpole or any other man. Richardson, the novelist, lived on the profits of his extensive business as a printer. Young, to be sure, got a pension; and Thomson, after tasting the worst miseries of author-life, got £100 a year from the Prince of Wales and a sinecure office worth other £300. But they were a mere handful of the writers who swarmed in London during the eighteenth century. Nearly all the rest lived from hand to mouth—a life so wretched and precarious that Grub Street, in which they herded together, has become a name inseparably associated with rags and hunger.

The mode of life among prosperous writers has been indicated with sufficient clearness in the chapters on Addison and Steele. They wore the clothes, drank the wine, played the games, and resorted to the haunts of fine gentlemen in the time of Anne. They tapped their snuff-boxes, and offered them with the true modish air, in the drawing-rooms of Bloomsbury and St. James's. They paid their twopence at the bar of the fashionable coffee-houses, and lit their long clay pipes at the little wax tapers that burned on the tables among the best company in London.

There were literary men, however, of Addison's own time, but more especially of a later day, to whom the penny or twopence paid for admission to the coffee-house was often the price of a meal. These poor strugglers were glad to get any kind of work that pen could do. They compiled indexes and almanacs; they wrote puffing reviews and short notices of books; they kept a stock of prefaces and prologues always on hand, one of which they gladly sold for half a crown. They edited classic authors with notes, and translated works from French, Italian, Latin, or Greek for fewer guineas than the thin fingers that held their worn-out stump of a goose-quill. It was a red-letter day with them when one of their articles was accepted by the proprietor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. And all this drudgery was in many cases embittered by the con-



sciousness that they were fitted for higher things, and the feeling that their daily battle for a crust and a garret was wearing out the brain by sheer stress of overwork and underpay.

Such a life, with its miseries and its fierce rushes into mad debauchery, whenever a dribble of money came, is thus painted by Macaulay in one of his *Essays*: "All that is squalid and miserable might now be summed up in the word poet. That word denoted a creature dressed like a scarecrow, familiar with compters and spunging-houses, and perfectly qualified to decide on the comparative merits of the Common Side in the King's Bench Prison, and of Mount Scoundrel in the Fleet. Even the poorest pitied him. And they well might pity him. For if their condition was equally abject, their aspirings were not equally high, nor their sense of insult equally acute. To lodge in a garret up four pair of stairs; to dine in a cellar among footmen out of place; to translate ten hours a day for the wages of a ditcher; to be hunted by bailiffs from one haunt of beggary and pestilence to another, from Grub Street to St. George's Fields, and from St. George's Fields to the alleys behind St. Martin's Church; to sleep on a bulk in June and amidst the ashes of a glass-house in December; to die in an hospital and to be buried in a parish vault, was the fate of more than one writer, who, if he had lived thirty years earlier, would have been admitted to the sittings of the Kitcat or the Scriblerus Club, would have sat in Parliament, and would have been entrusted with embassies to the High Allies; who, if he had lived in our time, would have found encouragement scarcely less munificent in Albemarle Street or in Paternoster Row.

"As every climate has its peculiar diseases, so every walk of life has its peculiar temptations. The literary character, assuredly, has always had its share of faults—vanity, jealousy, morbid sensibility. To these faults were now superadded the faults which are commonly found in men whose livelihood is precarious, and whose

principles are exposed to the trial of severe distress. All the vices of the gambler and of the beggar were blended with those of the author. The prizes in the wretched lottery of book-making were scarcely less ruinous than the blanks. If good fortune came, it came in such a manner that it was almost certain to be abused. After months of starvation and despair, a full third night or a well-received dedication filled the pocket of the lean, ragged, unwashed poet with guineas. He hastened to enjoy those luxuries with the images of which his mind had been haunted while he was sleeping amidst the cinders and eating potatoes at the Irish ordinary in Shoe Lane. A week of taverns soon qualified him for another year of night cellars. Such was the life of Savage, of Boyse, and of a crowd of others. Sometimes blazing in gold-laced hats and waistcoats; sometimes lying in bed because their coats had gone to pieces, or wearing paper cravats because their linen was in pawn; sometimes drinking champagne and tokay; sometimes standing at the window of an eating-house in Porridge island to snuff up the scent of what they could not afford to taste; they knew luxury; they knew beggary; but they never knew comfort. These men were irreclaimable. They looked on a regular and frugal life with the same aversion which an old gipsy or a Mohawk hunter feels for a stationary abode, and for the restraints and securities of civilized communities. They were as untamable, as much wedded to their desolate freedom, as the wild ass. They could no more be broken in to the offices of social man than the unicorn could be trained to serve and abide by the crib. It was well if they did not, like the beasts of a still fiercer race, tear the hands which ministered to their necessities. To assist them was impossible; and the most benevolent of mankind at length became weary of giving relief which was dissipated with the wildest profusion as soon as it had been received. If a sum was bestowed on the wretched adventurer, such as, properly

husbanded, might have supplied him for six months, it was instantly spent in strange freaks of sensuality, and before forty-eight hours had elapsed, the poet was again pestering all his acquaintances for two-pence to get a plate of shin of beef at a subterraneous cook-shop. If his friends gave him an asylum in their houses, those houses were forthwith turned into taverns. All order was destroyed; all business was suspended. The most good-natured host began to repent of his eagerness to serve a man of genius in distress when he heard his guest roaring for fresh punch at five o'clock in the morning."

Through such a life some, like Samuel Johnson, struggled up to competence and fame; but by far the greater number perished prematurely, worn out with the toils and fevers of the way; and there was not a man of those who passed safely through the furnace but bore the deep scars of the burning with him to the grave.

Men who lived thus on the verge of starvation would not, as we may well suppose, be very nice in their taste, or very choice in the expressions which they hurled at a political or literary foe. They needed to be kept in order; and many brethren of the literary craft were therefore no strangers, in the eighteenth century, to the pillory and the scourge.

When an author had finished a play, his first care was to carry the precious manuscript to the most likely manager he knew; and to this great man he confided it with many bows and cringing civilities. Weeks—perhaps months—passed by, and the theatrical season drew near its close. Still no missive from the theatre. With fear and trembling the threadbare, haggard author presents himself at the stage door, and is ushered, after some delay, into the presence of the autocrat. He humbly ventures to remind his Dramatic Highness of the play left there many months ago, and is rewarded for the sickening suspense he has endured, and the abject humility he has had to assume

in making his approaches to the presence, by the cool assurance that such a thing has been utterly forgotten until that moment. And sure enough, after tumbling over heaps of similar papers, the dusty manuscript is found lying as it was left, tied up with the very red string which the wretched dramatist had begged from his landlady to encircle the all-important roll. He is a lucky man if this second reminder induces the manager to read and accept the play; the chances are that it is returned unread, with the consolatory remark that dozens of authors have been so treated during the season. If he has heart and pluck enough to persist, the only hope of really getting his work put on the stage is to curry favour with some nobleman's valet, who may induce his Lordship to read the play and recommend it to a manager. One poor fellow, who had danced attendance thus upon a leading London manager for many months, at last grew sick of the constant drain upon his temper and his patience, and demanded his play again. It could not be found. Fruitless search was made; it was gone. And when the broken-spirited literary hack ventured to complain of such treatment, the irritated manager, thrusting his hands into a drawer, drew out a bundle of manuscript plays with, "Choose any three of these for your miserable scribble, and let me hear no more of it or you."

Equally trying to the spirit, and yet more galling in the abject humility it demanded, was the hanging on at a great man's door, or the waiting in a great man's hall to pluck my Lord by the sleeve as he passed to his carriage, and beg a subscription for a forthcoming volume of poetry or prose. Success in such an undertaking depended much upon the number of half-crowns the poor author could afford to invest in buying the good-will of the porter or confidential footman of his Grace or Sir John. Not even the highest literary man was free from this humiliation of cringing before the great. No book appeared without a fulsome dedication or flattering apostrophe addressed to some

person of quality, as the phrase then went, whose footman came smirking to the author's dingy room a few days after publication with a present of five, or ten, or twenty guineas—the sum varying according to the amount of flattery laid on the belauded name, or perhaps oftener according to the run of luck which the gratified fashionable had happened to meet at the card-table of the night before.

In such miserable ways alone could the author of the eighteenth century eke out the poor pittance which the booksellers of the time—Tonson, Lintot, or Curll—could or did afford to pay for original works. But we must not suppose, as we might be led to suppose if we judged alone from the works of disappointed authors, that every London bookseller of the day was a kind of trading ogre, who fattened on the blood and brains of the writers he employed. The sale of books in general was small and slow. The circle of book-readers was narrow ; but still narrower was the circle of book-buyers. Indeed many men never bought books at all ; but when any work came out of which they wished to get a sight, they went to the bookseller's shop day after day, and for a small subscription obtained leave to read at the counter. Marking their page where they left off in the afternoon, they came back again and again, until the volume was finished. This practice, which crowded the shops and stalls of the booksellers a hundred years ago with a floating population of readers, laid the foundation of those useful circulating libraries and reading-clubs which so abound in modern days.

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## CHAPTER II.

JAMES THOMSON.

Born 1700 A.D. . . . . Died 1748 A.D.

EVERY one has read Thomson's *Seasons* ; comparatively few have read his *Castle of Indolence*. Yet the

latter is the finer piece of literary workmanship. The subject of the former comes home to every heart — we like to find our own thoughts and feelings pictured in the books we read ; and so the poem of the *Seasons*, displaying in equable verse the changeful beauty of the year, has come to be read by old and young, and loved by all.

The poet's father was minister of Ednam, in Roxburghshire ; and there, in 1700, James was born. Having received his elementary education at the Grammar School of Jedburgh, he became a student in the University of Edinburgh. Nothing of importance marked his progress there, until one day in the Divinity classroom he paraphrased a psalm in language so brilliantly figurative as to excite the wonder of the class and draw forth a rebuke from the professor, who cautioned him against the use of such high-flown diction in the pulpit. This was the turning-point in his career ; forthwith he abandoned his studies for the Church, wrote poetry more diligently than before, and upon the slightest encouragement from a friend, went to seek his fortune among the literary men of London.

A raw Scotsman newly landed in London streets was then the butt of every Cockney witling, and the sure prey of every city thief. Thomson did not escape, for as he gaped along the street his letters of introduction, which he had carefully knotted into his handkerchief, were stolen from his pocket. But he did not despair. When his poem of *Winter*, of which his friend Mallet thought very highly, was finished, he offered the manuscript to several 1726 booksellers without success ; until at last a A.D. Mr. Millar bought it for three guineas. It appeared in 1726. Poets in those days, if they desired success, were forced, as we have just seen, to dance attendance on the great. Having selected some rich or powerful man, they wrote a dedication, crammed with compliments, which often drew from the flattered magnate a purse of guineas, far outweighing the



niggard pay they got from their booksellers. Thomson in this way received twenty guineas from Sir Spencer Compton. Quickly *Winter* grew into public favour. One literary amateur and another read it, and buzzed the praises of the new poet everywhere. The panorama of the completed *Seasons* soon followed this success. Thomson tried his pen, too, upon tragedy; but his *Sophonisba* is only remembered by the rendering of one line,

“ O Sophonisba ! Sophonisba, O ! ”

into

“ O Jemmy Thomson ! Jemmy Thomson, O ! ”

in an anonymous pamphlet which reviewed it.

In 1731, Thomson set out for the Continent as tutor to the son of Sir Charles Talbot, afterwards Lord Chancellor. Having travelled through France, Switzerland, and Italy with his pupil, he returned to England and published a poem on *Liberty*, which he curiously enough considered to be his greatest work. About the same time he received from his patron Talbot the easy place of Secretary of Briefs in Chancery. When the Chancellor died, the secretary went out of office; although it is said that he might have retained it by soliciting the favour of the incoming minister. The loss of this appointment drove the poet again to pen-work. He wrote for the stage two tragedies, which proved failures. But the Prince of Wales granted him a yearly pension of £100; and he was, besides, made Surveyor-General of the Leeward Islands—from which office, after paying a man to do the work, he drew about £300 a year.

So the comfortable poet found at last a snug haven in which to spend his few remaining days. A pretty cottage at Richmond, filled with good furniture and well supplied with wine and ale, was the last home of Thomson. There, lounging in his garden or his easy-chair, he brought to a close his greatest poem, *The Castle of Indolence*, lavishing on its polished lines the

wealth of his ripened genius. This latest effort was published in May 1748. One day in the following August, after a sharp walk out of town, which heated him, he took a boat at Hammersmith for Kew. On the water he got chilled—neglected the slight cold—became feverish—and in a few days was dead.

The plan and style of Thomson's *Seasons* are too well known to need much comment. Many fine episodes of human life relieve the stillness and deepen the interest of the ever-changing pictures of natural scenery which fill this beautiful poem. A certain roughness and crudity, disfiguring many passages of the original work, were removed by the poet, as years developed more fully his technical skill. So many, indeed, were the changes and corrections, that the third edition of *The Seasons* may be looked upon almost as a new work. Thomson's style becomes occasionally inflated and wordy; but as to the ring of his blank verse, it has been well said that, with all its faults, it is his own—not the echo of another poet's song.

*The Castle of Indolence*, an allegory written in the stanza and the style of Spenser, affords a nobler specimen of his talent. No better illustration could be given of that wonderful linking of sound with sense which critics call *onomatopœia*. Stanza after stanza, rolling its dreamy music on the ear, soothes us with a soft and sleepy charm. Like Tennyson's Lotus-Eaters, the dwellers in this enchanted keep lie steeped in drowsy luxury. The good knight Industry breaks the magician's spell; but (alas for the moral teaching of the allegory!) we have grown so delighted with the still and cushioned life, whose hours glide slumberously by, that we feel almost angry with the restless being who dissolves the delicious charm. No man or boy need hope to be lured into early rising by the study of this poem. That Thomson's *forte* lay in description is clearly shown in both his leading works. On such a theme as Indolence he wrote *con amore*; for no man could better enjoy the *dolce far niente* of the lazy

Italian than he could himself. And when, after some hard battling with the stern realities of life, he had settled himself down in his quiet nest at Richmond—itsself a Cottage of Indolence—all circumstances were most favourable to the composition of his great work. It took its colours from his daily life. With £400 a year and nothing to do for it—lying down and rising when he liked, sauntering in the green lanes around his house, or sucking peaches in sunny nooks of his little garden—he mused and wrote and smoothed his verses, undisturbed by anything which could mar the music of his song. And yet, such is the irony of life, it is to Thomson that we owe one of the most stirring of our national songs. For it is now almost certain he is the author of *Rule Britannia*, an honour which has also been claimed for Mallet.

STANZAS FROM "THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE."

In lowly dale, fast by a river's side,  
 With woody hill o'er hill encompassed round,  
 A most enchanting wizzard did abide,  
 Than whom a fiend more fell is nowhere found.  
 It was, I ween, a lovely spot of ground :  
 And there a season atween June and May,  
 Half pranked with spring, with summer half imbrowned,  
 A listless climate made, where, sooth to say,  
 No living wight could work, ne cared even for play.

Was nought around but images of rest :  
 Sleep-soothing groves and quiet lawns between ;  
 And flowery beds that slumberous influence kest,  
 From poppies breathed ; and beds of pleasant green,  
 Where never yet was creeping creature seen.  
 Meantime unnumbered glittering streamlets played,  
 And hurled everywhere their waters sheen ;  
 That, as they bickered through the sunny glade,  
 Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

Joined to the prattle of the purling rills,  
 Was heard the lowing herds along the vale,  
 And flocks loud bleating from the distant hills,  
 And vacant shepherds piping in the dale :  
 And now and then sweet Philomel would wail,  
 Or stock-doves 'plain amid the forest deep,  
 That drowsy rustled to the sighing gale ;  
 And still a coil the grasshopper did keep ;  
 Yet all these sounds yblent inclined all to sleep.

Full in the passage of the vale above,  
 A sable, silent, solemn forest stood,  
 Where nought but shadowy forms was seen to move,  
 As Idlesse fancied in her dreaming mood ;  
 And up the hills, on either side, a wood  
 Of blackening pines, aye waving to and fro,  
 Sent forth a sleepy horror through the blood ;  
 And where this valley winded out below,  
 The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard, to flow.

A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was,  
 Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye ;  
 And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,  
 For ever flushing round a summer sky :  
 There eke the soft delights, that witchingly  
 Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,  
 And the calm pleasures, always hovered nigh ;  
 But whate'er smacked of noyance or unrest,  
 Was far, far off expelled from this delicious nest.

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### CHAPTER III.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON.

Born 1689 A.D. . . . . Died 1761 A.D.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON, the first parent of that countless tribe, the modern novel, was a joiner's son. Born in Derbyshire in 1689, the little fellow went to a village school, where he became a great favourite with his class-fellows by the exercise of his remarkable gift of story-telling. Ragged and bare-footed the little circle may have been that hemmed in the boy novelist ; but it was a pleasant picture for the old printer to look back upon through the lens of many years, as the beginning of his fame. We have a companion picture in the group that gathered so often in the Yards of the Edinburgh High School round the little Walter Scott. Nor was it only among the schoolboys of the village that young Sam Richardson was a favourite. His quiet, womanlike nature made him love the society of the gentler sex ; and while his rougher audiences were scattered through the woods

enjoying the savage glories of bird-nesting, or were filling the village green with their noisy games at fives or hockey, he sat, through spring afternoons and long summer evenings, the centre of a little group of needle-women, who sewed and listened while he read some book to them. Three of these girl-friends put his abilities to another use, when they secretly begged him to write their love-letters for them, or at least to put what they had already written into a polished shape. In these occupations of his boyhood we can easily trace the germs which grew in later years into *Pamela* and *Clarissa Harlowe*.

In his sixteenth year young Richardson was bound apprentice to Mr. John Wilde, a London printer. And thenceforward his career of prosperity in trade and of advancement in civic dignity resembles strongly the upward progress of the honest apprentice, as delineated by Hogarth. During his seven years of servitude he is honoured and trusted by his master, who calls him "the pillar of the house." His seven years over, he remains for some time as foreman among the old familiar types and presses. Then setting up in business for himself in Fleet Street, and later in Salisbury Square, he marries his master's daughter, and rises high in the estimation of the booksellers; for he possesses all the qualities most prized in a man of business, and in addition, a certain literary faculty, which lifts him above the mere mechanical craftsman. He continues in a small way to use the pen he had found so telling in the service of the Derbyshire lasses. Booksellers whom he knew used often to ask him for a preface or a dedication for the books he was printing. And so this honest London printer flourished and thrived, winning the goodwill of all around him, and amassing, by steady industry and attention to his trade, a very considerable fortune. His position as a business man may be judged from the fact that the printing of the Journals of the House of Commons was given to him while he was yet comparatively young. He was elected

Master of the Stationer's Company in 1754; and six years later he bought one-half share in the patent of King's Law Printer.

But it is not as King's Law Printer that we remember Samuel Richardson. When more than fifty years of this printer's life had passed, a talent, which had been slumbering almost unknown in the keen business brain, awoke to active life. A couple of bookselling friends requested him to draw up a series of familiar letters, containing hints for guiding the affairs of common life. Richardson undertook the task, but inspired with the happy idea of giving a deeper human interest to the letters, he made them tell a connected story, which he justly thought would barb the moral with a keener and surer point. In a similar way *The Pickwick Papers*, perhaps the most humorous book in English fiction, grew into being. A young writer, who had already furnished picturesque sketches of London life to an evening paper, was invited by a publishing firm to write some comic adventures in illustration of a set of sporting plates. He began to write, and losing sight very soon of the original idea of the work, he produced the narrative over which so many have laughed.

The subject of Richardson's first novel, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, is the domestic history of a pretty peasant girl who goes out to service; and after enduring many mishaps and escaping many dangers, becomes the wife of her rich young master—a simple, common theme, and quite unlike the subject-matter of those heavy, affected romances which had hitherto supplied readers of fiction with amusement in their leisure hours. It is surprising with how much truth Richardson has painted the life of this girl. The spice of the woman in his own nature gives a peculiarly truthful colouring to the pictures of Pamela's life. Little more than three months were occupied with the composition of the first part of this book. It appeared in 1740, and became the rage at



once. Five editions were sold within the year. The ladies went wild with rapture over its pages, and began to idolize the successful author. The appearance of *Pamela* has been chosen in our plan as the opening of a new era in English literature. It marks the turning of the tide. The affectation and licence of the earlier school of fiction had been slowly wearing away. People were sick, without knowing it, of the paint and patches, the brocades and strutting airs; and when a simple and truthful tale appeared, the reaction commenced, and a flood began to rise whose even, steady flow has worn a deep channel in our literature.

*Pamela* was followed in 1747-48 by a yet greater work, *The History of Clarissa Harlowe*. So powerful was the hold which this first of our great novelists had obtained over the public mind, that during the progress of *Clarissa* he was deluged with letters, entreating him to save his heroine from the web of misery he was slowly weaving round her. Happily for his own fame, he turned a deaf ear to such requests, and has added to our literary treasures a great tragedy in prose, of which the catastrophe has been perhaps too enthusiastically compared to "the noblest efforts of pathetic conception in Scott, in our elder dramatists, or in the Greek tragedians."

In less than five years Richardson was ready with the first volumes of his third great work, *Sir Charles Grandison*, in which, adopting a similar epistolary style, he paints with the same minuteness of touch the character of a gentleman and a Christian. Here, it must be confessed, he somewhat fails; for we get very tired of the long-winded and ceremonious Sir Charles, and his prim sweetheart. The truth seems to be that Richardson hardly drew Sir Charles from the life; for although a well-to-do citizen, he had not the *entrée* of those drawing-rooms where one or two genuine Grandisons mingled with scores of gaily-dressed Lovelaces.

Few read Richardson's novels in this age, for their extreme length and minuteness of description—in

which there appears something of a womanish love of gossip—repel any but serious students of English fiction. Our appetite for such tedious works has been spoiled by the banquets which Scott and Thackeray and Dickens have spread before us. But when we compare *Pamela* and *Clarissa* with the works that had preceded them, we shall be better able to appreciate the value of such productions, and we shall be less disposed to cavil at their faults. Their naturalness and comparative purity of tone made them a precious boon to the England of their own day.

Richardson's last years were spent in his villa at Parson's Green, where the ladies whose friendship he had won by his books vied with one another in soothing the last hours of the old man. He died in 1761, at the ripe age of seventy-two.

#### PAMELA AT CHURCH.

Yesterday we set out, attended by John, Abraham, Benjamin, and Isaac, in fine new liveries, in the best chariot, which had been cleaned, lined, and new harnessed; so that it looked like a quite new one; but I had no arms to quarter with my dear lord and master's, though he jocularly, upon my noticing my obscurity, said that he had a good mind to have the olive branch quartered for mine. I was dressed in the suit of white, flowered with silver, a rich head-dress, and the diamond necklace, ear-rings, etc., I mentioned before: and my dear sir, in a fine laced silk waistcoat of blue Paduasoy, and his coat a pearl-coloured fine cloth, with gold buttons and button-holes, and lined with white silk; and he looked charmingly indeed. I said, I was too fine, and would have laid aside some of the jewels; but he said, it would be thought a slight to me from him, as his wife; and though I apprehended that people might talk as it was, yet he had rather they should say anything, than that I was not put upon an equal foot, as his wife, with any lady he might have married.

It seems the neighbouring gentry had expected us, and there was a great congregation; for (against my wish) we were a little late, so that, as we walked up the church to his seat, we had many gazers and whisperers: but my dear master behaved with so intrepid an air, and was so cheerful and complaisant to me, that he did credit to his kind choice, instead of shewing as if he was ashamed of it: and I was resolved to busy my mind entirely with the duties of the day; my intentness on that occasion, and my thankfulness to God for His unspeakable mercies to me, so took up my thoughts, I was much less concerned than I should otherwise have been, at the gazings and whisperings of the congregation, whose eyes were all turned to our seat. When the sermon was ended, we stayed the

longer, for the church to be pretty empty; but we found great numbers at the doors, and in the porch; and I had the pleasure of hearing many commendations, as well of my person as my dress and behaviour, and not one reflection, or mark of disrespect.

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## CHAPTER IV.

HENRY FIELDING.

Born 1707 A.D. . . . . Died 1754 A.D.

MINGLED with the murmur of praise which welcomed Richardson's *Pamela*, there rose a laugh from those whose tastes were less blameless—the ordinary man of the London world. Among the loudest laughers was a careless, good-humoured, very clever lawyer of thirty-five, called Harry Fielding. Richardson scarcely heeded—for he must have expected—the jeers of the aristocratic coffee-houses; but he was bitterly mortified at Fielding's laughter, for he laughed on paper, and in 1742 gave the world the novel of *Joseph Andrews*, a mockery of those virtuous lessons which the respectable printer of Salisbury Court had endeavoured to inculcate by his first book.

The life of Fielding has in it much of the same colouring and scenery as the life of Dick Steele—a thoroughly congenial spirit, gay, careless, generous, witty, and good-natured. Lady Mary Montagu, his cousin, well knew of whom she was writing when she described Fielding as one who forgot every evil when he was before a venison pasty and a flask of champagne.

He was born in 1707 at Sharpham Park, in Somersetshire. His father was a general in the army, and his mother was the daughter of a judge. General Fielding, who was a grandson of the Earl of Desmond, set an example of extravagance which his celebrated son was but too ready to imitate. A broken residence at Eton and Leyden gave Harry a kind of rambling

education ; but no supplies coming from home, he was obliged, at the age of twenty, to cut his studies short, and try to make his bread by writing for the London stage. He entered literary life as a composer of light comedies and farces ; but in this department he gained no great renown.

About 1735 he married Charlotte Cradock, who brought him £1,500, upon the strength of which, and a small estate left him by his mother, he retired to the country for a time. But only for a time. Two years sufficed to scatter to the winds almost every guinea he had ; and he came up to town again, to enter the Middle Temple, and there complete his long suspended study of the law. Called to the 1740 Bar in 1740, he struggled for a while with A.D. the opening difficulties of a lawyer's career ; but few briefs came his way, and his pen was the chief bread-winner of the household. It was principally as a pamphleteer, or political writer, in defence of the Hanoverian succession, that he employed his literary powers during this period of his life.

Then came that tide in the current of his life which, taken at the flood, bore him on, if not to fortune, at least to lasting fame. Richardson published *Pamela* ; and Fielding ridiculed the sentimentalism of the work in his *Joseph Andrews*. This start in novel-writing took place in 1742. 1742 The character of Parson Adams is justly A.D. considered to be Fielding's masterpiece of literary portraiture.

Now fairly embarked as a successful novelist, and fully awake to the powers of that pen long degraded to petty uses, he continued to produce the works immortally associated with his name. His political connections, however, were still kept up. For a while he edited a journal directed against the Jacobites, who in 1745 showed a front so threatening. And in 1748 he was appointed, through the interest of Lord Lyttelton, one of the Justices for Middlesex

and Westminster. This position, similar in nearly all respects to that of a London police-magistrate to-day, brought him in fees amounting to not quite £300 a year. But though the emoluments of the office were small, and obtained by unpleasant drudgery, his position yet enabled him to observe phases of low and criminal life, which supplied fine material for his darker sketches of English society.

Unhappily, this great man never could shake off the habits of good living he had contracted in his early life ; and such bore in middle age their fruits. Dropsy, jaundice, and asthma seized him in their grip, and after a vain struggle for health in 1754 England, he sailed in 1754 for Lisbon, to try A.D. the effect of a warmer climate. All was useless. His life's strength was gone. In the autumn of that year he died in the city of his exile, and was buried there in the cemetery of the British Factory.

In spite of the coarseness and indelicacy which mar its pages, Fielding's *Tom Jones* is recognized as one of the world's greatest novels. Written in his first year of magistrate life, it contains scenes and characters which could be drawn only from the daily experiences of the police-bench. *Jonathan Wild* and *Amelia* are the principal remaining works of this great artist. The former depicts the career of a thief, who turns thief-catcher, and ends his days upon the gallows. The latter commemorates the domestic virtue either of the novelist's first wife, or of that amiable maidservant who sorrowed so deeply for the loss of her mistress that, in gratitude and tender concern for his motherless children, he made her their second mother. And he never regretted the step, for she did her duty with loving faithfulness both to him and them.

The world described in Fielding's books is not the world of to-day. Much of the fun was of the roughest physical kind—practical jokes that would nowadays

fill our courts of law with actions for assault and battery, and violent altercations in roadside inns, which generally ended in a row, involving everybody present, to the serious detriment of eyes and limbs. The *mêlée* of fishwives, cabbage-mongers, and policemen, which enlivens every second or third scene of the comic business in our Christmas pantomimes, affords us a specimen of the same boisterous humour. Everything is pelted about, and everybody beats everybody else, until the noisy crowd is hustled off the stage, and the scene or chapter ends. The tedious mode of travelling, especially the crawling of the stage wagon or slow coach of those days, necessarily gives a striking prominence to inn-life; for those who travelled much a hundred years ago spent one-third of their nights in the Maypoles and Blue Dragons that lined every road. The highwayman, too, is sure to figure wherever the progress of travellers is depicted. And here the novelist has ample scope for displaying the courage of his hero, or the cowardice of some braggart soldier, who has been swearing and twirling his moustache fiercely ever since the coach set out, but who turns pale, and with shaking hand fumbles silently for his purse, when the ominous pistol-barrel shows at the coach window.

Fielding's early practice as a writer for the stage formed his first literary training for the great works that have made his name famous. We may safely hazard the conjecture that his novels would have wanted much of their brilliant, changeful play and skilful development of story if his pen had not been well practised already in farces and vaudevilles. A play may be viewed, not improperly, as the skeleton of a novel. The framework of dialogue is there, which, being filled up and clothed with passages of description, grows into the full work of fiction. A play acted on the stage before us, and a novel in the hand, from which we read, address the mind through different channels, but with like result.



Fielding's supreme merit is his unsparing fidelity to fact. He is a realist in the true sense, conceding nothing to sentiment or convention. But, on the other hand, he has none of the depressing monotony of latter-day realism. His robust and Shakespearean humour, his optimism, and, in the last resort, his love of justice and nobility, save him from the shallow cynicism of those who see only the darker side of life. His influence was more wholesome than Richardson's, for virtue with him is regarded as disconnected from worldly reward, and to be followed for its own high sake.

#### PARTRIDGE AT THE PLAY.

(FROM "TOM JONES.")

As soon as the play, which was *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, began, Partridge was all attention, nor did he break silence till the entrance of the ghost; upon which he asked Jones: "What man that was in the strange dress; something," said he, "like what I have seen in a picture. Sure it's not armour, is it?" Jones answered: "That is the ghost." To which Partridge replied, with a smile: "Persuade me to that, sir, if you can. Though I can't say I ever actually saw a ghost in my life, yet I am certain I should know one if I saw him better than that comes to. No, no, sir; ghosts don't appear in such dresses as that neither." In this mistake, which caused much laughter in the neighbourhood of Partridge, he was suffered to continue till the scene between the ghost and Hamlet, when Partridge gave that credit to Mr. Garrick which he had denied to Jones, and fell into so violent a trembling that his knees knocked against each other. Jones asked him what was the matter, and whether he was afraid of the warrior upon the stage. "O la! sir," said he, "I perceive now it is what you told me. I am not afraid of anything, for I know it is but a play; and if it was really a ghost, it could do one no harm at such a distance, and in so much company; and yet if I was frightened, I am not the only person." "Why, who," cries Jones; "dost thou take me to be such a coward here besides thyself?" "Nay, you may call me coward if you will; but if that little man there upon the stage is not frightened, I never saw any man frightened in my life. Ay, ay; go along with you! Ay, to be sure! Who's fool, then? Will you? Who ever saw such foolhardiness? Whatever happens, it is good enough for you. Oh! here he is again! No further! No, you've gone far enough already; further than I'd have gone for all the king's dominions!" Jones offered to speak, but Partridge cried: "Hush, hush, dear sir; don't you hear him?" And during the whole speech of the ghost he sat with his eyes fixed partly on the ghost, and partly on Hamlet, and with his mouth open; the same passions, which succeeded each other in Hamlet, succeeding likewise in him.

## CHAPTER V.

TOBIAS GEORGE SMOLLETT.

Born 1721 A.D. . . . . Died 1771 A.D.

THIRD among the older masters of English fiction, both in date of appearance as an author and in rank as a novelist, comes Tobias George Smollett. Born in 1721 at Dalquhurn House, near Renton, in Dumbartonshire, and educated at the Grammar School of Dumbarton and the University of Glasgow, this boy of good family entered upon life as an apprentice to Mr. Gordon, an apothecary in Glasgow. His grandfather, Sir James Smollett of Bonhill, who had borne the expenses of his education, having died without leaving him any further provision, the youth of nineteen made his way up to London, carrying among his few shirts a tragedy, called *The Regicide*, which he fondly hoped would raise him at once to the pinnacle of fame and fortune. How many poor fellows have toiled nightly for months over a crazy desk, and have then trudged weary miles up to the city with the same high hope burning in their hearts! And how many, a dozen years after that sanguine, light-hearted journey to town, have found nothing left of those bright hopes but a few smouldering embers amid the gray ashes of a disappointed life!

*The Regicide* being refused by the London managers, Smollett had to fall back upon the profession he had learned from Gordon. Finding the stage doors shut against him, he sought the humble position of surgeon's mate in the navy, and was, after some time, appointed to an eighty-gun ship. It was thus that he acquired his wonderful knowledge of sailors and sailor life. His ship forming one of the fleet which was dispatched against Carthagea with so disastrous a result, he had an opportunity of witnessing and feeling the horrors of naval warfare. The story of the

expedition may be found in his novel of *Roderick Random*, and also in his *Compendium of Voyages and Travels*. During a short residence in Jamaica he met Miss Lascelles, the lady who afterwards became his wife.

Upon his return to London in 1744 he endeavoured to establish himself as a medical man; but the attempt was unsuccessful. Betaking himself more eagerly to the pen when the lancet failed him, he wreaked his revenge upon those whom he considered his foes by the publication in 1746 of *Advice*, a satire which has been well characterized as possessing all the dirt and violence of Juvenal, with none of that writer's power. All through life Smollett's unhappy temper preyed upon his own spirit, and made enemies of some who might otherwise gladly have befriended him. He was one of those poor men who aim too high at the outset of their career, and who for ever after their first failure are possessed with the haunting monomania that all the world has entered into an envious plot to slight their works and deprive them of their justly-earned fame.

Another coarse and bitter satire, *The Reproof*, in which actors, authors, and critics were abused without stint or measure, produced a yet deeper feeling of disgust against the irritable surgeon—a feeling

1748 which the publication of *Roderick Random* in A.D. 1748 could scarcely abate. This first novel at once stamped Smollett as one worthy to rank high among those who were then plying the novelist's trade. But his works are evidently the creations of an inferior mind. There are, indeed, in Smollett's books an innate coarseness and an unscrupulous love of the indelicate, which we do not find in the works of Richardson or Fielding. Theirs is rather the coarseness of the age in which they lived. In Smollett's case the coarseness is in the fibre of his own nature.

His second novel, *Peregrine Pickle*, followed in three

years. It is disfigured by the same faults as its predecessor. Another attempt to get into medical practice—this time at Bath—having ended as before, he took a house at Chelsea, and became an author by profession. If he could have flung away the prickles of his temper along with his lancet, he might have gathered round him a circle of friends. But the soured surgeon grew sourer still. His pen worked busily on. *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, the career of a sharper, and a translation of *Don Quixote*, occupied some four years, which bring us to one of the few sunny spots we meet in this gloomy life. He visited Scotland, saw his mother again, saw the crystal Leven and the oak woods of Cameron once more, talked of *auld lang syne* with former schoolfellows and playmates, and then hurried back to his *alter ego*, sitting with knitted brow and bitter pen at a desk in southern England.

Smollett's sixteen remaining years were years of incessant literary occupation. He undertook to edit the *Critical Review*, an office for which he was ill qualified, since of all men an editor ought not to be quarrelsome. Endless were the scrapes into which the abuse of his editorial functions brought him. Admiral Knowles had him fined £100 and imprisoned for three months as the author of a scurrilous libel. While he was in jail he wrote a tiresome English imitation of *Don Quixote's* adventures, entitled *Sir Launcelot Greaves*. Turning his pen from fiction to history, he produced, in the brief period of fourteen months, a *Complete History of England*, from the landing of Cæsar to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, to which he afterwards added chapters carrying the work down to 1765. The latter part of this history was undertaken to supplement the greater work of the historian Hume. In a few old-fashioned libraries Hume and Smollett even still stand shoulder to shoulder as the great twin authorities on English history, although the light of modern research has

detected errors and flaws by the hundred in their work.

Wilkes and Smollett had a tilt about Lord Bute's ministry, in which the latter, defending the *quondam* tutor of royalty, suffered severely. The last years of the novelist, embittered by the death of his only child, a girl of fifteen, were chiefly spent in restless travel. Visiting France and Italy, he vented his spleen upon even the crumbling ruins of Rome and the exquisite statue of the Venus de Medici. The poor, peevish author was hastening to his end ; but before he sank beneath this life's horizon his genius shot forth its brightest beam. Disappointed in his last earthly hope—that of obtaining a consulship on some shore of the Mediterranean, where his last hours might be prolonged in a milder air—he travelled to the neighbourhood of Leghorn, and settling in a cottage there, finished *Humphrey Clinker*, which is undoubtedly his finest work. Lismahago is the best character in this picture of English life ; Bath is the principal scene upon which the actors play  
1771 their various parts. Scarcely was this brilliant work completed, when Smollett died, an  
A.D. invalid exile, worn out long before the allotted seventy years.

His pictures of the navy men who trod English decks a century ago are unsurpassed and imperishable. Trunnion, the one-eyed commodore ; Hatchway and Bowling, the lieutenants ; Ap-Morgan, the kind but fiery Welsh surgeon ; Tom Pipes, the silent boatswain, remain as types of a race of men long extinct, who manned our ships when they were, in literal earnest, wooden walls, and when the language and the discipline to which officers of the royal navy were accustomed were of the roughest and the hardest.

Smollett wrote poetry also, but it hardly rises above mediocrity. His odes to *Independence* and to *Leven Water*, and his *Tears of Scotland* present the most favourable specimens of his poetic powers.







JOHN KEATS.

## AN UNEXPECTED REUNION.

As we stood at the window of an inn that fronted the public prison, a person arrived on horseback, genteelly though plainly dressed in a blue frock, with his own hair cut short, and a gold-laced hat upon his head. Alighting, and giving his horse to the landlord, he advanced to an old man who was at work in paving the street, and accosted him in these words: "This is hard work for such an old man as you." So saying, he took the instrument out of his hand, and began to thump the pavement. After a few strokes, "Have you never a son," said he, "to ease you of this labour?" "Yes, an' please your honour," replied the senior, "I have three hopeful lads, but at present they are out of the way." "Honour not me," cried the stranger: "it more becomes me to honour your grey hairs. Where are those sons you talk of?" The ancient pavior said, his eldest son was a captain in the East Indies, and the youngest had lately enlisted as a soldier, in hopes of prospering like his brother. The gentleman desiring to know what was become of the second, he wiped his eyes, and owned he had taken upon him his old father's debts, for which he was now in the prison hard by.

The traveller made three quick steps towards the jail: then turning short, "Tell me," said he, "has that unnatural captain sent you nothing to relieve your distresses?" "Call him not unnatural," replied the other; "God's blessing be upon him! he sent me a great deal of money, but I made a bad use of it; I lost it by being security for a gentleman that was my landlord, and was stripped of all I had in the world besides." At that instant a young man, thrusting out his head and neck between two iron bars in the prison window, exclaimed: "Father! father! if my brother William is in life, that's he." "I am! I am!" cried the stranger, clasping the old man in his arms, and shedding a flood of tears—"I am your son Willy, sure enough!" Before the father, who was quite confounded, could make any return to this tenderness, a decent old woman, bolting out from the door of a poor habitation, cried: "Where is my bairn? where is my dear Willy?" The captain no sooner beheld her than he quitted his father, and ran into her embrace.

## CHAPTER VI.

THOMAS GRAY. / 8

Born 1716 A.D. . . . . Died 1771 A.D.

THE poet Gray was born in Cornhill, in London, on a December day in 1716. His father, a money-scrivener, was so violent in temper that Mrs. Gray, separating from him, joined her sister in opening a shop in Cornhill for the sale of Indian goods. To the love of this

good mother Thomas Gray owed his superior education. Her brother being a master at Eton, the lad went there to school, and found among his class-fellows young Horace Walpole, with whom he soon struck up a close friendship. Many a time, no doubt, Walpole, Gray, and West, another friend of the scrivener's son, did their Latin verses together, and many a golden summer evening they passed merrily in the meadows by the Thames.

In 1735 he entered as a pensioner at Peterhouse, Cambridge, his uncle's college. And for three years he lingered out his life there, chained to a place whose laws and lectures he felt to be most irksome. Mathematics were his especial disgust; but the classics he loved with no common love, and studied with no common zeal. His schoolfellow Walpole was at Cambridge too; and when, in 1738, Gray left without a degree, the two friends agreed to set out on a Continental tour. Together they saw France and Italy, the poet wandering with delight amid the ruins of the great past, the *connoisseur* ransacking the old curiosity shops of Rome and Florence in search of rare pictures and choice medallions, such as in later days he piled up in dainty confusion under the roof of Strawberry Hill. Their tastes being thus dissimilar, it is no wonder that Walpole and Gray quarrelled and separated after some time.

Gray returned to England, and upon his father's death he settled down at Cambridge, where most of his after life was spent. It has been already said that he hated the ways of the place, which, in his opinion, never looked so well as when it was empty; but there were *books* in abundance on the shelves of its noble libraries, and their silent yet speaking charms—he knew no other love—bound the poet for life to the banks of the Cam. Here, like a monk in his cell, he read and wrote untiringly. A glance round his study would, no doubt, have shown his tastes. Between the leaves of a well-used Plato or

Aristophanes there might often have been found, drying for his *hortus siccus*, some rare wildflowers, which he had gathered in the meadows by the Cam. Books on heraldry and architecture shouldered the trim classics on his loaded bookshelves, while such things as sketches of ivied ruins, a lumbering suit of rusty armour, or a collection of curious daggers and pistols hanging on the crowded walls, most probably displayed the antiquarian tastes of the inmate.

A quiet life like that the poet led has almost no history. Besides such salient points as the appearance of his various works, there are only three events worthy of notice in his later years. These events were—his removal in 1756 to Pembroke Hall from Peterhouse, caused by the annoyance of some madcap students; his refusal in 1757 of the Poet-laureateship, vacant by Cibber's death; and his appointment in 1768 to the professorship of Modern History at Cambridge. His chief trips were to London, where he lodged near the British Museum, and explored its literary treasures with a student's patient love; to Scotland, where he met the poet Beattie; to the English lakes in 1769; and to Wales in the autumn before his death. This event took place in 1771. He had been breaking up for many months, when gout, settling in his stomach, cut him off with a sudden attack.

Gray is best known by his famous *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, whose solemn stanzas roll out their muffled music like the subdued tolling of a great minster bell. Corrected and recorrected line by line, as were all this poet's works, it yet shows no sign of elaboration—its melancholy grace is the perfection of simplicity. There are writers with whom a slovenly style stands for nature, and rude, unpruned stanzas for the fairest growths of poetry. Gray was not of these. His classic taste was too pure and too fastidious to be content with anything but carefully-polished verses, and we therefore have to thank him for giving us in the *Elegy* as noble a specimen of grave and scholarly

English as our literature affords. This poem was published in 1751.

But the triumph of his genius may be viewed in his two magnificent odes—*The Progress of Poesy* and *The Bard*. The subject of the latter is the terrific malison of a Welsh bard, escaped from the massacre at Conway, who, standing on an inaccessible crag, prophesies the doom of the Norman line of kings, and the glories of the Tudors. This done, he springs from the rock to perish in the flood below. The chief facts of early English history have never been so finely woven into poetry as in *The Bard*.

Among his other poems we may notice his *Ode to Spring*; his *Hymn to Adversity*; his much admired *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton*; and some light, humorous verses on *Mr. Walpole's Cat*. His chief prose writings are his *Letters*, written in a clear, elegant, and often most picturesque style.

#### OPENING STANZAS OF THE "ELEGY."

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower  
The moping owl does to the moon complain  
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,  
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,  
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,  
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,  
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,  
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;

No children run to lisp their sire's return,  
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,  
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke ;  
How jocund did they drive their team a-field !  
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys and destiny obscure ;  
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile  
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
Await alike the inevitable hour :—  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

## CHAPTER VII.

DAVID HUME.

Born 1711 A.D. . . . . Died 1776 A.D.

DAVID HOME, the first of his family to write himself Hume, was a cadet of a distinguished Scottish house, and was born at Edinburgh in April 1711. After passing through the classes in the College of his native city, he nominally began the study of the law ; but, as he tells us himself, he was devouring Cicero and Virgil while his friends fancied he was poring over Voet and Vinnius. Literature ousted law, and commerce had no better fortune. A few months among the sugar-houses of Bristol, far from weaning young Hume from his literary tastes, only deepened his love of study and his desire to be a man of letters.

From Bristol he crossed to France, where he wrote his first work, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, published in London in 1739. It was an utter failure, not having achieved even the distinction of being abused. His second work, *Moral and Philosophical Essays*, composed partly in Scotland, met with tolerable success.

All this time he had been living on the slender means



he got from home. But in 1745 an occupation, well paid to make up for its unpleasantness, fell in his way. He became the companion of the young Marquis of Annandale, whose mind was somewhat affected. Having held this charge for about a year, Hume accepted the position of secretary to General St. Clair, in whose suite he visited Vienna and Turin, seeing foreign life under most favourable auspices, and mixing in the first Continental circles.

After his return to Britain he lived for two years in his brother's house, engaged chiefly in the composition of his *Political Discourses* and his *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. In 1752 he undertook the charge of the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh—not so much for the sake of the nominal salary then attached to the office as for the great command of books which such a position gave him.

There he seems first to have formed the idea of writing that *History of England* which made him famous. The work grew to completeness in a most irregular fashion. Afraid at first to face so long a

story as the entire range of English history,  
1754 he began with the accession of the Stuart race.

A.D. The first volume, closing with the Regicide, appeared in 1754. Only forty-five copies were sold in a twelvemonth! His sympathy for the slain king and for Strafford excited a cry of disapproval and rebuke from almost every sect and every party. So deeply did he feel this mortifying reception of his book that, but for a French war breaking out, he would have hidden himself, with changed name, in some country town of France, and there have tried to forget his native land and the defeat of his literary ambition. But the ill wind of that French war, which gave us Canada, also blew to our libraries the remaining volumes of Hume's *England*. The second, treating of the years between the Regicide and the Revolution, came out in 1756. The tide had turned. Everybody began to read and praise the book. The year 1759 saw

the publication of the third and fourth volumes, containing the history of the Tudors ; and two other volumes, in 1762, added the narrative of earlier events, and brought the work to a triumphant close. For ease, beauty, and picturesque power of style, there was then nothing like it in the range of English historical literature ; and for these qualities it yet holds an honoured place on our bookshelves. Yet the day of Hume as an authority on English history has long gone by. The light of modern research has detected countless flaws and distortions in the great book, which was carefully, even painfully, revised as to its style, but which was formed in great part of a mass of statements often gathered from very doubtful sources, and heaped together, almost unsifted and untried. The diligence of that eminent modern historian who often read a quarto volume to obtain material for a single sentence, and travelled a hundred miles to verify a solitary fact, was utterly unknown to David Hume. He wrote exquisitely ; but he sometimes spent the beauty of his style upon mere chaff and sawdust.

The completion of his *History* made Hume a famous man. The Earl of Hertford invited him to join the embassy at Paris, there to act as interim secretary. His fame had gone before him, and he became a sort of lion in the French capital. When he recrossed the Straits of Dover, it was to find promotion awaiting him at home. For about two years he acted as Under-Secretary of State, and in 1769 he returned to spend the evening of his life in the beautiful city of his birth, "passing rich" with £1,000 a year—the result of a prudent life and the profits of his pen. For seven years longer he enjoyed the best society Edinburgh could afford, and then, in August 1776, he died. A journey to Bath, in the spring of that fatal year, was of no avail to stop the progress of his disease.

To-day Hume is best remembered as a philosopher. He represents the sceptical revolt against Locke's philosophy of common sense, which Berkeley had

inaugurated. As a critical organon, his work stands in the highest class. But he left no constructive system behind him. It remained for Kant and his German successors to develop his critical work and to advance beyond negation to the creation of a new metaphysics.

#### DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

(FROM "HISTORY OF ENGLAND.")

She rejected all consolation ; she even refused food and sustenance ; and, throwing herself on the floor, she remained sullen and immovable, feeding her thoughts on her afflictions, and declaring life and existence an insufferable burden to her. Few words she uttered : and they were all expressive of some inward grief, which she cared not to reveal : but sighs and groans were the chief vent which she gave to her despondency, and which, though they discovered her sorrows, were never able to ease or assuage them. Ten days and nights she lay upon the carpet, leaning on cushions which her maids brought her : and her physicians could not persuade her to allow herself to be put to bed, much less to make trial of any remedies which they prescribed to her. Her anxious mind at last had so long preyed on her frail body, that her end was visibly approaching ; and the Council being assembled, sent the keeper, admiral, and secretary, to know her will with regard to her successor. She answered with a faint voice, that as she had held a regal sceptre, she desired no other than a royal successor. Cecil requesting her to explain herself more particularly, she subjoined that she would have a king to succeed her ; and who should that be but her nearest kinsman, the king of Scots ? Being then advised by the archbishop of Canterbury to fix her thoughts upon God, she replied that she did so, nor did her mind in the least wander from him. Her voice soon after left her ; her senses failed ; she fell into a lethargic slumber, which continued some hours, and she expired gently, without further struggle or convulsion (March 24, 1603), in the seventieth year of her age and forty-fifth of her reign.

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### CHAPTER VIII.

WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

Born 1721 A.D. . . . . Died 1793 A.D.

SECOND in date of birth of the illustrious triad of historians that graced the eighteenth century was William Robertson, the son of a Scottish clergyman. Born at Borthwick, in Midlothian, in the year 1721, he studied for the profession of his father ; and at the

age of twenty-two was presented to the living of Gladsmuir, in Haddingtonshire.

The quietude of his country manse was broken by few incidents—annual visits to the General Assembly at Edinburgh being, perhaps, the greatest events of the young minister's life. But the completion of every week's sermon left his pen trained to greater skill in the weaving of eloquent and dignified English sentences; and every new book which the weekly carrier brought to the moorland manse from some dim old shop in the High Street of the metropolis widened his views of society and civilization. In his country retirement history became his favourite study. Most ministers in his sphere are content with their pulpit-work, and their round of farmhouse visits, travelling beyond the literary work required for their professional duty only to pen an occasional letter to the newspapers, or to prepare for a telling appearance, when summer calls the great Church Court into session. But Robertson was not content with this. He preached and visited and spoke admirably upon the great questions which in his day came to be debated in the General Assembly; but while he did these well, his leisure hours were devoted to building up a kind of reputation which these could never build.

In 1758 the country pastor, whose recreations took a shape so noble and enduring, was promoted to Lady Yester's Church in Edinburgh. And in the following year the reading public—especially 1759 the literary men of London—were electrified A.D. by the appearance of *A History of Scotland* from this unknown minister's pen. Dealing with the reigns of Mary Stuart and her son, down to the accession of the latter to the English throne, he described, in pure and dignified language, the sorrows of that unfortunate queen. He stands midway between those who believe her to have been a beautiful martyr and those who brand her as a beautiful criminal.

The minister of Lady Yester's became, in three

years after the publication of this book, principal of the University of Edinburgh, and soon received a striking mark of royal approval in his appointment as historiographer for Scotland. Not content to rest on the fame he had won, he pushed on to higher ground. His greatest work, the *History of A.D. Charles the Fifth of Germany*, was published in 1769, ten years after the appearance of his first production. A rapid view of European politics and society previous to the accession of the great Emperor precedes the story of the reign, which is narrated in clear, majestic English. The materials from which Robertson drew his account of this great central epoch of European history have, since the day he wrote, been tested and sifted and rearranged, with all the valuable additions that time has brought. And while his great *History* still remains a standard work, valuable supplements stand beside it in our libraries, from which a new light shines on many portions of the character and reign of Charles the Fifth. The researches of Prescott the American historian, and Stirling-Maxwell, the latter of whom wrote *The Cloister Life of Charles V.*, give us another notion of the man Charles than we get from the purple and gold of Robertson's portraiture.

The fault of this historian was one common to the chief writers of his time. Filled with an exaggerated idea of the dignity of history, he trembles at the thought of descending to so mean a thing as daily life. The Emperor moves before us in all his grandeur, the rich velvet of his train sweeping in stately waves upon the marble that he treads. We know many of the laws he made, the wars he waged, the great public assemblies and pageants of which he was the brilliant central figure; but we know little of the man who dwelt within the gorgeous wrappings, for we see him as if on a lofty terrace, where he plays his magnificent part, while we stand far away at the foot of the stairs, humble spectators of the imperial drama. Of the

many-hued life the people lived, we hear next to nothing. Stateliness and elegance are the characteristic features of Robertson's style; but, inseparable from these, we find a cold sameness and want of colour. He walks a minuet with the historic Muse, who, according to his notion of her, is a lady used only to the very best society, dressed in the perfection of the mode, her complexion heightened with the faintest brush of *rouge*, and too stately and precise in her manners and her gait to be charged with such crimes as naturalness or ease.

Eight years passed before his third great work—*The History of America*—appeared. The story of Columbus fascinated his pen; and nowhere, perhaps, have we a finer specimen of stately narrative than in his description of the great first voyage of the Italian sailor and his landing on the new-found western soil.

A year or two before his death, which occurred in 1793 at the Grange House, Edinburgh, he published an *Essay on the Earlier History of India*, which, however, was founded on sources not always reliable or safe. This, indeed, is a fault more or less pervading all his works. Like Hume, he often adopted second-hand statements, without looking carefully into the evidence on which they rested.

#### THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

(FROM "THE HISTORY OF AMERICA.")

About two hours before midnight, Columbus, standing on the forecastle, observed a light at a distance, and privately pointed it out to Pedro Gutierrez, a page of the queen's wardrobe. Gutierrez perceived it, and calling to Salcedo, comptroller of the fleet, all three saw it in motion, as if it were carried from place to place. A little after midnight, the joyful sound of "Land! land!" was heard from the *Pinta*, which kept always ahead of the other ships. But having been so often deceived by fallacious appearances, every man was now become slow of belief, and waited in all the anguish of uncertainty and impatience for the return of day. As soon as morning dawned, all doubts and fears were dispelled. From every ship an island was seen about two leagues to the north, whose flat and verdant fields, well stored with wood, and watered with many rivulets, presented the aspect of a delightful country. The crew of the *Pinta* instantly began the *Te Deum*, as a hymn of thanksgiving to God, and were joined by those of the other ships with tears of



joy and transports of congratulation. This office of gratitude to Heaven was followed by an act of justice to their commander. They threw themselves at the feet of Columbus, with feelings of self-condemnation, mingled with reverence. They implored him to pardon their ignorance, incredulity, and insolence, which had created him so much unnecessary disquiet, and had so often obstructed the prosecution of his well-concerted plan; and passing, in the warmth of their admiration, from one extreme to another, they now pronounced the man, whom they had so lately reviled and threatened, to be a person inspired by Heaven with sagacity and fortitude more than human, in order to accomplish a design so far beyond the ideas and conception of former ages.

As soon as the sun arose, all their boats were manned and armed. They rowed towards the island with their colours displayed, with warlike music, and other martial pomp. As they approached the coast, they saw it covered with a multitude of people, whom the novelty of the spectacle had drawn together, whose attitudes and gestures expressed wonder and astonishment at the strange objects which presented themselves to their view. Columbus was the first European who set foot on the New World which he had discovered. He landed in a rich dress, and with a naked sword in his hand. His men followed, and, kneeling down, they all kissed the ground which they had so long desired to see. They next erected a crucifix, and prostrating themselves before it, returned thanks to God for conducting their voyage to such a happy issue. They then took solemn possession of the country for the crown of Castile and Leon, with all the formalities which the Portuguese were accustomed to observe in acts of this kind in their new discoveries.

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## CHAPTER IX.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

Born 1728 A.D. . . . . Died 1774 A.D.

BUFFON's well-known and eternally-misquoted saying, "*Le style est l'homme*," is by no man better illustrated than by Oliver Goldsmith. A guileless good-nature, a tenderness for all his human brotherhood, a gay, unthinking hopefulness, shine clearly out from every page he wrote. The latter half of his short life of forty-five years was spent in a continuous struggle for daily bread; his earlier years were full of change and hardship. Yet sneers and buffets, drudgery and debt, had no power to curdle the milk of human kindness in his heart.

Charles Goldsmith, a Protestant clergyman, was trying to live on £40 a year at the little village of Pallas or Pallasmore, in the county of Longford, when in 1728 his famous son Oliver was born. Before the child was two years old, the living of Kilkenny West, worth nearly £200 a year, rewarded this good parson for his virtues and his toils; and the family in consequence removed to a commodious house at Lissoy, in the county of Westmeath. Here little Oliver grew up, went to the village school, and had a severe attack of smallpox, which left deep pits in his poor face. When he went to higher schools at Elphin, Athlone, and Edgeworthstown, the thick, awkward, pale, and pock-marked boy was knocked about and made fun of by his cruel seniors, until the butt began to retort sharp arrowy wit upon those who sneered at his ugly face or uncouth movements.

In 1744 he passed the sizarship examination at Trinity College, Dublin, being placed last on the list of the eight successful candidates. The sizar of those days, marked by a coarse black sleeveless gown and a red cap, had to do much servile work—sweeping the courts, carrying the dishes up from the college kitchen, and waiting upon the Fellows as they dined. The kindness of his uncle Contarine, who had paid most of his school bills, followed him to college too; but even with this aid, when the Reverend Charles Goldsmith died in 1747, his son Oliver was left not far from starvation in the top room of No. 35. Here we detect his first literary performances. Writing street-ballads for five shillings apiece, he used to steal out at night to hear them sung and watch their ready sale in the dimly-lighted streets. Here, too, we see the early symptoms of that benevolence, which was almost a mental disease, for it was seldom that the five shillings came home with the hungry student—some of the hard-earned money had gone to the beggars he had met upon the way. Hated and discouraged by his tutor, he grew idler than ever—took his full share in the

ducking of a bailiff—tried for a scholarship, and failed—was knocked down by his tutor—ran away—was brought back to college by his brother—took 1749 a very low B.A. in 1749—and then went home A.D. to his mother's little cottage at Ballymahon for two years.

We cannot trace minutely his attempts to be a tutor, a clergyman, a lawyer, a physician. During his stay in Edinburgh, whither he went in 1752 to study medicine, his name was better known among his fellow-students as a good story-teller, and one who sang a capital Irish song, than for any distinctions he won in the classrooms of the professors. His two winters in the Scottish capital were followed by a winter at Leyden, where he lived chiefly by teaching English. One day, after spending nearly all the money he had just borrowed from a friend in buying a parcel of rare tulip-roots for his uncle Contarine, he left Leyden "with a guinea in his pocket, but one shirt to his back, and a flute in his hand," to make the grand tour of Europe, and seek for his medical degree.

Between February 1755 and February 1756 he travelled through Flanders, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy—very often trudging all day on foot, and at night playing merry tunes on his flute before a peasant's cottage, in the hope of a supper and a bed—for a time acting as companion or governor to the rich young nephew of a pawnbroker—and in Italy winning a shelter, a little money, and a plate of macaroni by disputing in the Universities. His degree of M.B., on which his claim to be called Doctor Goldsmith rests, was probably received during these wanderings either at Louvain or at Padua. No one can regret this twelvemonth's walk, who has read *The Traveller*, or those chapters in *The Vicar of Wakefield* which depict the career of a philosophic vagabond.

And then began that struggle in the troubled waters of London life which closed only when the struggler lay coffined in Brick Court. Before he settled down

to the precarious work of making a livelihood by his pen, he made a desperate attempt to gain a footing in his own profession. In a shop on Fish Street Hill he worked for a while with mortar and pestle as an apothecary's drudge. He then commenced practice among the poor of Southwark—an episode of his life during which we catch two glimpses of his little figure: once, in faded green and gold, talking to an old schoolfellow in the street; and again, in rusty black velvet, with second-hand cane and wig, concealing a great patch in his coat by pressing his old hat fashionably against his side, while he resists the efforts of his poor patient to relieve him of the encumbrance. In the printing-office of Richardson the novelist he was for a time reader and corrector to the press; and he was afterwards usher in Dr. Milner's school at Peckham—a position in which he was far from being happy. One day Griffiths the bookseller, dining at Milner's, proposed to give him board and a 1757 small salary if he would write for the *Monthly A.D. Review*. Accepting the offer, he contributed many papers to that periodical; but he complained that the bookseller, or the bookseller's old wife, tampered with every one of them. Returning in a few months to the usher-life at Dr. Milner's, he felt a passing gleam of prosperity when he received his appointment as surgeon to a factory on the Coromandel coast; but, for some unexplained reason, this hope of permanent employment came to nothing. As a last chance, he presented himself at Surgeons' Hall in a suit of clothes obtained on Griffith's security, in order to pass as a surgeon's mate in the navy; but fortunately for the readers of the *Vicar* and *The Deserted Village*, he was refused. This 1758 last hope broken in his eager grasp, he was A.D. driven to the pen once more. His rejection at Surgeons' Hall may thus be viewed as marking his real entrance upon the literary profession.

A garret in a miserable square, called Green Arbour

Court, which was approached by a flight of stone stairs, styled suggestively "Break-Neck-Steps," had lately become his home. This dirty room, furnished with a mean bed and a single wooden chair, witnessed the misery of the would-be surgeon's mate on the night of his rejection, and saw him, thoughtless of all but pity, go out, four days later, to pawn the clothes he had got on the bookseller's security, in order to help his poor landlady, whose husband had just been seized by bailiffs. There he wrote reviews and memoirs for Smollett's periodical. There he was visited

by Percy of the *Reliques*, who found him writing his first important work, *An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe*.  
1759 A.D.

He was soon engaged to write a threepenny periodical, which was to appear every Saturday under the title of *The Bee*. It was a *blue* book, utterly unlike the ponderous tomes so called now, for it was full of wit and graceful writing. But it did not take. Still the busy pen worked on. *The British Magazine*, edited by Smollett, was enriched with several *Essays* by Goldsmith. Among these we find some of his most charming shorter pieces, of which *The Reverie in the Boar's Head at Eastcheap*, and the story of *The Shabby Actor, picked up in St. James's Park*, are oftenest read. Soon in *The Public Ledger*, a newly-sprung paper, there appeared a series of *Letters*, describing a Chinaman's impressions of English life, which attracted considerable notice. These productions of Goldsmith's pen were afterwards published in a collected form as *The Citizen of the World*. And if the hack of Green Arbour Court had written no more than these *Letters*, contributed twice a week to the *Ledger* for a guinea a piece, he might, as the creator of Beau Tibbs and the Man in Black, claim a high place among our English classics.

The night of May 31, 1761, was memorable in Wine Office Court, where Goldsmith then lived; for on that night the great Johnson ate his first supper at Gold-

smith's table. Percy brought about the meeting ; and Johnson, in honour of the occasion, as well as to disabuse his entertainer's mind of the idea that he was a sloven, went through the unusual ceremonies of powdering his wig and putting on clean linen.

Another visit from Johnson to Goldsmith, in the country lodging at Islington, where the latter had taken refuge from the din and dinginess of Fleet Street, stands out in violent contrast to this evening. It was three years later. The little Irishman and the big Englishman had grown to be firm friends. Many a Monday night at seven had they shaken hands at the Turk's Head in Soho, where the famous weekly suppers of the Literary Club had already begun. One morning in 1764 an urgent message 1764 arrived from Goldsmith, begging Johnson to A.D. come to him as soon as possible. Johnson sent him a guinea, and went out to Islington immediately afterwards. He found that poor Goldsmith had been arrested by his landlady for the rent. A newly-opened bottle of Madeira stood on the table, which Johnson wisely corked before he began to talk of what was to be done. Goldsmith producing a manuscript novel from his desk, down sat his friend to look over *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Struck at once with the merit of the work, Johnson went out and sold it to a bookseller for £60, with which the now triumphant Goldsmith discharged the debt he owed. Such is the accepted story, though critics differ about its details.

Fifteen months passed before an advertisement in the *St. James's Chronicle* announced *The Vicar of Wakefield* in two duodecimo volumes. The interval between sale and publication had made its author famous, for his beautiful poem of *The Traveller* had appeared not long after the distressful day at Islington. Johnson declared that it would not be easy to find anything equal to it since the death of Pope. The sister of Reynolds said, after hearing the poem read



aloud, that she would never more think Dr. Goldsmith ugly. A simple saying, but very true, and very natural. The world has endorsed the utterance of that middle-aged lady. The bull-dog face, with its rugged skin and coarse, blunt features, shines with a beauty from within, above all loveliness of flesh and blood, as we close the pages of *The Traveller*, *The Deserted Village*, or *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and think of the little man who wrote these works. We forget that he delighted to array his small person in sky-blue and plum-coloured coats, and to exhibit himself, as if pinned through with a long sword, in the glittering crowds that filled the gardens at Vauxhall; or, if we remember these things, it is only to smile good-naturedly at the weakness of a great man. *The Vicar of Wakefield* needs no description. An exquisite naturalness is its prevailing charm. No bad man could write a book so full of the soft sunshine and tender beauty of domestic life. It was coloured with the hues of childhood's memory; and the central figure in the group of shadows from the past, that came to cheer the poor London author in his lonely garret, was the image of his dead father. "For," says John Forster in his *Life of Goldsmith*, not more truly than beautifully, "they who have loved, laughed, and wept with the Man in Black of *The Citizen of the World*, the Preacher of *The Deserted Village*, and Doctor Primrose in *The Vicar of Wakefield*, have given laughter, love, and tears to the Reverend Charles Goldsmith."

Still the busy pen worked on, for the wolf was always at the door. Among the minor tasks of the *quondam* usher we find an *English Grammar*, written for five guineas; and in later days some *School Histories*, abridgments of his larger volumes. But more famous works claim our notice.

His comedy of *The Good-Natured Man*, acted in 1768, brought him nearly £500; which, with the true Grub Street improvidence, he scattered to the winds at once. He took those chambers in Brick Court,

Middle Temple, where the last act of his life-drama was played out. He furnished them in mahogany and blue moreen. He gave frequent dinners and suppers, startling all the quiet bar-risters round him with noisy games at blind-man's buff and the choruses of jovial songs. He was constantly in society with Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds, and lived far beyond his means.

In May 1770 appeared his finest poem, *The Deserted Village*. Before August closed, a fifth edition was nearly exhausted. The village, "sweet Auburn," whose present desolation strikes the heart more painfully from the lovely pictures of vanished joy the poet sets before us, was that hamlet of Lissoy where his boyhood had been spent. The soft features of the landscape, the evening sports of the village, the various noises of life rising from the cottage homes, the meek and earnest country preacher, the buzzing school, the whitewashed ale-house, attract by turns our admiration as we read this exquisite poem. And not least touching is this yearning utterance, spoken from the writer's solitary heart :—

"In all my wanderings round this world of care,  
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—  
I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,  
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down ;  
To husband out life's taper at the close,  
And keep the flame from wasting by repose :  
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,  
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill—  
Around my fire an evening group to draw,  
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw ;  
And as a hare whom hounds and horns pursue,  
Pants to the place from whence at first he flew,  
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,  
Here to return—and die at home at last."

The emphatic words of the dying Gray, who heard *The Deserted Village* read at Malvern, where he spent his last summer in a vain search for health, must be echoed by every heart : "That man is a poet."

Debt now had Goldsmith fast in its clutch. He

worked on, but was forced to trade upon his future—to draw heavy advances from his booksellers in order to meet the pressing wants of the hour. He undertook a *History of England*, in four volumes; a *History of the Earth and Animated Nature*, largely a translation from Buffon; *Histories of Greece and Rome*; and wrote a second successful comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*, which was first acted in 1773.

The last flash of his genius was the short poem *Retaliation*, written in reply to some jibing epitaphs which were composed on him by the company met one day at dinner in the St. James's Coffee-house. Garrick's couplet ran thus:—

“Here lies Nolly Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,  
Who wrote like an angel, but talked like poor Poll.”

And certainly in the reply Garrick suffers for his unkindness.

With hands yet full of unfinished work, Goldsmith lay down to die. An old illness 1774 seized him. Low fever set in. He took A.D. powders against the advice of his doctors, and died, after nine days' sickness, on April 4, 1774.

#### THE FAMILY PICTURE.

(FROM “THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.”)

My wife and daughters, happening to return a visit at neighbour Flamborough's, found that family had lately got their pictures drawn by a limner, who travelled the country, and took likenesses for fifteen shillings a head. As this family and ours had long a sort of rivalry in point of taste, our spirit took the alarm at this stolen march upon us, and, notwithstanding all I could say, and I said much, it was resolved that we should have our pictures done too. Having, therefore, engaged the limner (for what could I do?), our next deliberation was to show the superiority of our taste in the attitudes. As for our neighbour's family, there were seven of them, and they were drawn with seven oranges—a thing quite out of taste, no variety in life, no composition in the world. We desired to have something in a brighter style, and, after many debates, at length came a unanimous resolution of being drawn together, in one large historical family piece. This would be cheaper, since one frame would serve for all; and it would be infinitely more genteel, for all families of any taste were now drawn in the same manner. As we did not immediately recollect an historical subject to hit us, we were contented each with

being drawn as independent historical figures. My wife desired to be represented as Venus; and the painter was requested not to be too frugal of his diamonds in her stomacher and hair. Her two little ones were to be as Cupids by her side; while I, in my gown and bands, was to present her with my books on the Whistonian Controversy. Olivia would be drawn as an Amazon, sitting upon a bank of flowers, dressed in a green josoph, richly laced with gold, and a whip in her hand. Sophia was to be a shepherdess, with as many sheep as the painter could put in for nothing; and Moses was to be dressed out with a hat and white feather.

Our taste so much pleased the squire, that he insisted on being put in as one of the family, in the character of Alexander the Great at Olivia's feet. This was considered by us all as an indication of his desire to be introduced into the family, nor could we refuse his request. The painter was therefore set to work, and, as he wrought with assiduity and expedition, in less than four days the whole was completed. The piece was large, and it must be owned he did not spare his colours; for which my wife gave him great encomiums. We were all perfectly satisfied with his performance; but an unfortunate circumstance, which had not occurred till the picture was finished, now struck us with dismay. It was so very large that we had no place in the house to fix it! How we all came to disregard so material a point is inconceivable; but certain it is we had all been greatly remiss. This picture, therefore, instead of gratifying our vanity, as we hoped, leaned in a most mortifying manner against the kitchen wall, where the canvas was stretched and painted, much too large to be got through any of the doors, and the jest of all our neighbours. One compared it to Robinson Crusoe's long-boat, too large to be removed; another thought it more resembled a reel in a bottle; some wondered how it could be got out, but still more were amazed how it ever got in.

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## CHAPTER X.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

← Born 1709 A.D. . . . . Died 1784 A.D.

A HUGE and slovenly figure, clad in a greasy brown coat and coarse black worsted stockings, wearing a gray wig with scorched foretop, rolls in his armchair long past midnight, holding in a dirty hand his nineteenth cup of tea. As he pauses to utter one of his terrible growls of argument, or rather of dogmatic assertion, commencing invariably with a thunderous "Sir," we have leisure to note the bitten nails, the scars of king's evil that mark his swollen face, and the

convulsive workings of the muscles round mouth and eyes, which accompany the puffs and snorts foreboding a coming storm of ponderous talk. Such was the famous Doctor Samuel Johnson in his old age, when he had climbed from the most squalid cellars of Grub Street to the dictatorial throne of English criticism—such the man who wrote *Rasselas* and *London*, who compiled the first *English Dictionary*, and composed the majestic pages of *The Rambler*.

This celebrated son of a poor man, who used to spread his little bookstall on market-day in Birmingham to tempt the louts of Warwickshire, was born in Lichfield on September 18, 1709. From infancy the child struggled with constitutional disease, which weakened his eyes and left indelible seams across his little face. The father gave his afflicted boy all he could—a liberal education; and upon this foundation—the best for fame that can ever be laid—the work of a great and noble lifetime began to rise.

Slowly, obscurely, and with many heavy falls did the ill-dressed, ugly, clumsy youth begin to take his first steps towards the dictatorship of English letters. Having received his elementary education chiefly at Stourbridge, he entered Pembroke College, Oxford. But his father could spare no more money to the lad, so a degree could not be taken then. He must wait until he has earned a higher title with his pen. One terrible foe with which poor Johnson had to battle through all his life must not be forgotten when we strive to estimate the greatness of his triumph over circumstances. Fits of morbid melancholy often seized him, which, as he says, “kept him mad half his life.” Penniless, diseased, ill-favoured, only half educated, and touched with melancholia, the

1731 youth of twenty-two stood on the threshold  
 A.D. of the mean house within which his father lay  
 dead, looking out upon a world that seemed  
 all cold and bare and friendless to his gaze. No  
 wonder that his earlier portrait shows a thin cheek and

saddened brow, with lines of suffering already round the lips.

Trudging on foot to Market Bosworth in Leicestershire, he became usher in a school. It would not do ; by natural temperament he was totally unfitted for the work. We then find him translating for a bookseller in Birmingham ; and after a while marrying a Mrs. Porter, the widow of a mercer there, who had £800.\* With this money he attempted to start a school of his own near Lichfield ; but he could not gather pupils enough to pay the rent and keep his wife in comfort. So, packing up his little stock of clothes and books, he set out in 1737 for London, accompanied by a former A.D. pupil, fresh-coloured, good-humoured, little Davy Garrick, who was going up to study law in Lincoln's Inn, but in whose brain the footlights were already shining far more brightly than briefs or pleadings at the bar.

Up to London went the dapper pupil and his great, hulking master ; and there they parted, to meet occasionally, but each to go his own way. And Johnson's was a hard and perilous path. We have already given a picture of literary life in those days. The worst miseries of such a life were endured by Johnson. For six-and-twenty years the pen scarcely ever left his hand. How often he and Savage wandered footsore all night through the streets of London, unable to hire the meanest shelter ; how often they spent their last penny on a little loaf, which they tore with wolfish teeth, we cannot tell. But we know that miseries like these were commonly endured by men of letters in Johnson's day, and that he had his full share of such bitterness and want. It was for Cave the bookseller that he chiefly drudged, enriching *The Gentleman's Magazine* with articles of various kinds. His poem *London*, a satire in imitation of Juvenal,

\* Mrs. Johnson died on March 17, 1752, to the deep and lasting grief of her husband, and was buried at Bromley.



laid the foundation of his literary fame by establishing him in the good graces of the booksellers. For this work Dodsley gave him ten guineas. A *Life of Savage* (1744) was followed by a second satire in Juvenal's manner, *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749); but these are only the most notable works in a vast crowd of minor writings which occupied the days and nights of these busy years. His tragedy of *Irene*, begun in his teaching days, was brought upon the stage in 1749; but it failed to hold its ground.

Johnson's name is inseparably associated with *The Rambler*, a periodical of the *Spectator* class, which appeared twice a week between March 1750 and March 1752. Only four of the papers proceeded from other pens. There was some strange sympathy between the bulky frame of the essayist and the ponderous words that came from his ink-bottle; and in the pages of *The Rambler* there is certainly much of wordy weight. He reappeared as an essayist, after the lapse of six years, in a lighter periodical called *The Idler*, which ran to 103 numbers, closing with its last sheet the chequered list of single-article serials which had opened with *The Tatler's* pleasant talk.

While writing for *The Rambler*, and for some years before the starting of that heavy serial, Johnson had been steadily at work upon his *Dictionary of the English Language*. There was no such work in English literature; and when Johnson undertook to finish the herculean labour in three years, he had but a slight notion of the toil that lay before him. He was to receive for the completed work £1,575—a comparatively small sum when we recollect that it took him over seven years to bring his labour to a close, and that he had to pay several copyists, who sat in his house in Gough Square, in a room fitted up like a lawyer's office, working away at the slips of paper on which the various words, definitions, and quotations were jotted down roughly by the great lexicographer himself. The name we have just used sounded sweet to

the ear of classical Johnson, who was never so happy as when piling these huge blocks of antiquity into English sentences. The *Dictionary* was a great work, but necessarily imperfect. In etymology it is very defective; for of those Teutonic languages from which come three-fifths of our English he knew next to nothing.

When Johnson's mother died, he devoted the nights of a single week to the composition of a book, which paid the expenses of her funeral. This 1759 was *Rasselas*, a tale of Abyssinia, in which A.D. much solid morality is inculcated in language of "a long resounding march." But there is no attempt on the part of the author to identify himself with Oriental modes of thought. The *heik* and *burnoos* of the Eastern prince and philosopher cannot conceal the old brown coat and worsted stockings of the pompous English moralist. The gray wig peeps from below the turban. In a word, Johnson talks at us throughout the entire book; he talks sensibly and well, but we cannot believe in the thin disguise of tawny cheek and muslin robes.

The great turning-point of Johnson's life, at which he comes out from darkness, or at least from dim twilight, into bright and steady light, is that May day in 1762 on which he received the happy news that the king had conferred on him a pension of £300 a year. Thenceforward he wrote less, 1762 but talked continually. We know all about A.D. the Johnson of this later period. The Johnson who starved with Savage is a dim shadow; but the burly Doctor who lived in Bolt Court, and thought no English or Scottish landscape at all comparable to the mud-splashed pavement and soot-stained houses of Fleet Street, is almost a living reality, with whom any evening we please we may sit for hours. We know even how he ate his dinner—with flushed face and the veins swollen on his broad forehead. We know that he puffed and grunted and contradicted

everybody, reviling as fools and blockheads and barren rascals all who dared to differ from his Literary Highness. We know that he had secret stores of orange-peel, hoarded we know not why, and that he never was happy unless he had touched every post he passed in the streets when walking to and from his house. We know that he bore marks of scrofula, and was troubled with St. Vitus's dance. And we know that he sheltered with unchanging kindness in his house a peevish old doctor, a blind old woman, and a negro. We know no other author as this old man is known. For in 1763 he became acquainted with James Boswell, Esquire, a Scottish advocate of much enthusiasm and imperturbable complacency, the thickness of whose skin enabled him to enjoy the great Englishman's society, in spite of sneers and insults hurled by day and night at his empty head. Not a vacuum, however, was that head; for one fixed idea possessed it—admiration of Samuel Johnson, and the resolve to lose no words that fell from his idolized lips. Nearly every night when Boswell went home he wrote out what he remembered of the evening's talk; and these notes grew ultimately into his great *Life of Johnson*. To this fussy gentleman we owe a book which is justly held to be the best biography in the English language. Of other men whose lives have been written we possess pictures; of Johnson we have a photograph—accurate in every line and descending to the minutest details of his person and his habits. Having spoken thus far of the man, we shall shortly sum up the chief events of his closing life, and leave the full story to be gathered from the pages of Boswell's marvellous book.

His degree of LL.D., conferred in 1765 by the University of Dublin, was confirmed ten years later by his own Alma Mater. In 1765 he published his edition of Shakespeare, the preface to which is one of the best specimens of his prose we have. In the autumn of 1773 he made a tour through eastern

Scotland and the Hebrides ; and from his letters to Mrs. Thrale he afterwards constructed his *Journey to the Hebrides*. In 1775 he visited Paris.

*The Lives of the Poets*, finished in 1781, formed the last of his important works. Beginning with Cowley, he writes of the leading poets down to his own day. His unfair view of Milton has been already noticed. In truth, Johnson seems never to have felt the full meaning of the word "poet." He was himself a master of pentameter rhymes, smooth, lofty, full-sounding ; and we cannot but believe that the skilful manufacture of such appeared to him the highest flight of poetic genius. If he had any poetic fancy at all, it must have been of the palest kind—gray with London smoke and smothered in Latin polysyllables. Let no reader take his knowledge of the English poets from Johnson's *Lives*, if he would know the true proportions of our bards. Some of his dwarfs are giants ; many of his giants have dwindled into dwarfs.

Burke, Garrick, Gibbon, Reynolds, Goldsmith, and many others of the first men in London, were the constant associates of King Samuel. Of these, Garrick was the only man who had known him almost from the first. The Thrales—a rich brewer and his wife—opened their hospitable house to the Doctor in his declining years. Streatham became more his home than the lonely chambers in Bolt Court. Here he drank countless cups of tea, had his friends from London out to see him, and was, in fact, a second master of the house. But the end was creeping on. One friend after another dropped into the grave. And after two years of complicated disorders—paralysis, dropsy, asthma, and the old melancholy—he joined the company of illustrious dead that sleep in silence under the stones of Westminster Abbey. On Monday, the 13th of December 1784, his last breath was drawn at his own house in London.

Dr. Johnson's English style demands a few words.

So peculiar is it, and such a swarm of imitators grew up during the half century of his greatest fame, that a special name—Johnsonese—has been often used to denote the march of its ponderous classic words. Yet it was not original, and not a many-toned style. There were in our literature, earlier than Dr. Johnson's day, writers who far outdid their Fleet Street disciple in recruiting our native ranks with heavy-armed warriors from the Greek phalanx and the Latin legion. Of these writers Sir Thomas Browne was perhaps the chief. Goldy, as the great Samuel loved to call the author of the *Deserted Village*, got many a sore blow from the doctor's conversational sledgehammer; but he certainly contrived to get within the doctor's guard and hit home, when he said, "*If you were to write a fable about little fishes, Doctor, you would make the little fishes talk like whales.*" Macaulay tells us that when Johnson wrote for publication, he did his sentences out of English into Johnsonese. His letters from the Hebrides to Mrs. Thrale are the original of that work of which the *Journey to the Hebrides* is a translation; and it is amusing to compare the two versions. "When we were taken upstairs," says he in one of his letters, "a dirty fellow bounced out of the bed on which one of us was to lie." This incident is recorded in the *Journey* as follows: "Out of one of the beds on which we were to repose started up, at our entrance, a man black as a Cyclops from the forge." Sometimes Johnson translated aloud. "*The Rehearsal*," he said, very unjustly, "has not wit enough to keep it sweet." Then, after a pause, "It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction."

One of the most natural pieces of English that ever came from Johnson's pen was his letter to Lord Chesterfield, written in a mood of angry pride to reject the offered patronage of that nobleman. We subjoin it, in preference to heavier specimens of Johnson's style.)

February 7th, 1755.

MY LORD,

I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of *The World*, that two papers, in which my *Dictionary* is recommended to the public, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, with some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before. The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks. Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help?

The notice you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity, not to confess obligations when no benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble, most obedient Servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.



## CHAPTER XI.

## OTHER WRITERS OF THE SEVENTH ERA.

## POETS.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, born in 1714 at Halesowen, in Worcestershire, after receiving his higher education at Pembroke College, Oxford, retired to spend his days upon his estate of Leasowes, of which his father's death had left him master. His chief works are *The School-mistress*, "a descriptive sketch, after the manner of Spenser;" and *The Pastoral Ballad*, which is considered the finest English specimen of its class. Shenstone died at Leasowes in 1763.

WILLIAM COLLINS, one of our finest writers of the Ode, was the son of a hatter at Chichester, and was born there in 1721. He enjoyed the advantage of a classical education at Winchester, and at Magdalen and Queen's Colleges, Oxford. *The Passions*, and his *Odes to Liberty* and *Evening* are his finest lyrical pieces. His *Oriental Eclogues*, written at college, afford a specimen of his powers in another style—that of descriptive writing. After a short life, clouded with many disappointments, Collins sank into a nervous weakness, which continued until his death in 1759.

MARK AKENSIDE wrote the *Pleasures of Imagination*. He was the son of a butcher at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where he was born in 1721. In 1744 he took his degree of M.D. at Leyden, and in the same year his great poem appeared. He enjoyed some practice as a physician, but his chief support was derived from the liberality of a friend. Akenside died somewhat suddenly in 1770 of a sore throat.

The WARTONS, a father and two sons, were poets and poetical critics during part of the last century. The father was Professor of Poetry at Oxford—an office which was also held by his second son, Thomas (1728-90). Thomas Warton's chief poem was *The*

*Pleasures of Melancholy*, published when he was only nineteen; but his greatest work was his *History of English Poetry*. He became poet-laureate in 1785. An elder brother, Joseph, who was headmaster of Winchester School and afterwards a prebendary of St. Paul's, also wrote poems, but of inferior merit. His *Ode to Fancy* may be considered a favourable specimen of his style.

JOHN HOME, a well-known dramatist, was born at Leith in 1722. He became minister of Athelstaneford, but when he wrote the tragedy of *Douglas* he had to resign his living. George III. having conferred on him a sinecure office and a pension—together worth about £600 a year—on this comfortable income he enjoyed the best literary society of the Scottish capital. Of all his works, *Douglas* alone is remembered. Home died in 1808.

WILLIAM MASON, born at Hull in 1724, was a close friend of the poet Gray, whose acquaintance he made at Cambridge. Mason wrote many odes and dramas; but *The English Garden*, a blank-verse poem in four books, was his chief composition. After the death of Gray he edited the *Poems*, and published the *Life and Letters* of his friend. Mason died in 1797.

THOMAS PERCY, Bishop of Dromore, deserves our gratitude for his collection of ballads, published in 1765 under the title of *Reliques of English Poetry*. These old songs, revived and often supplemented by the collector, gave a strong impulse to the genius of Scott and other poets. Percy, a Shropshire man, lived from 1729 until 1811. Before obtaining the bishopric of Dromore he was Dean of Carlisle.

ERASMUS DARWIN, the poet-laureate of botany, was born in 1731 at Elston Hall, Newark. Having received his education at Cambridge, and taken a medical degree at Edinburgh, he began to practise as a physician at Lichfield. His principal poem, *The Botanic Garden*, appeared in three parts between 1789 and 1792. His reputation as a poet has greatly declined. He died in 1802.

WILLIAM FALCONER, born at Edinburgh in 1732, was the son of a barber. His early life at sea prepared him for the composition of his fine poem, *The Shipwreck*. The *Britannia*, of which he was second mate, was wrecked off Cape Colonna. He was afterwards a midshipman and purser in the Royal Navy. In 1769, the *Aurora*, on board of which he was then serving, foundered, with the loss of all hands, it is supposed, in the Mozambique Channel.

JAMES BEATTIE, born in 1735 at Laurencekirk, in Kincardineshire, was educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen. His fame as a poet rests upon *The Minstrel*, published in 1771. Written in the Spenserian stanza, it depicts in musical verse the opening character of Edwin, a young village poet. Beattie, who became at an early age Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic at Marischal College, died of paralysis in 1803.

JAMES MACPHERSON, a Scottish Chatterton of maturer growth who did *not* commit suicide, was born in 1736 near Kingussie, in Inverness-shire, and was educated at Aberdeen. In 1761 and 1763 he gave to the world two epic poems, *Fingal* and *Temora*, which he professed to have translated from materials discovered in the Highlands of Scotland. The opinion generally received now is that he *discovered* them in his own desk, written on his own paper with his own pen. They present, in florid and highly-coloured prose, stirring pictures of old Celtic life. Many years of Macpherson's life were spent in London as a political writer. At Belleville, a property which he bought in his native parish, he died in 1796.

CHARLES CHURCHILL, born in Westminster in 1731, was a dissipated and disgraced clergyman who wrote biting and fluent poetry of an inferior order. The *Rosciad*, *Night*, and the *Prophecy of Famine* are among his most noted works. He died of fever at Boulogne in 1764.

THOMAS CHATTERTON, "the marvellous boy that perished in his pride," was the son of a sub-chantor in Bristol Cathedral. In that city the young poet



SIR WALTER SCOTT.  
*From the painting by Raeburn.*



was born in 1752. Educated in the most humble way, he entered an attorney's office at fourteen. The covers of old schoolbooks left by his dead father were formed of valueless parchment deeds, taken from an old chest in the muniment room of a Bristol church. Among these remains of "Mr. Canynge's Coffre," Chatterton pretended to have found fragments of ancient poems, sermons, and articles descriptive of the city churches, etc. They were all written by himself, in the old lettering and spelling, upon stained parchments. The boy of seventeen went up to London to write for bread and fame. He toiled hard, but sank under the struggle. One effort to save himself from this whirlpool—an application for the position of surgeon's mate in Africa—failed. He sent most of his money home to his mother and sisters, with glowing accounts of his prospects. But his prospects proved a deceptive mirage. Soon, stung to the core by neglect and increasing want, he formed the desperate resolve of suicide. One August day in 1770 the lad, not yet eighteen, took a dose of arsenic, and died amid the fragments of his torn papers. Picturesque description is the leading charm of his poems.

#### PROSE WRITERS.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE, remarkable as a theological writer, was born in London in 1702. Much of his life was spent at Northampton, where for many years he was head of a theological academy. His *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, his *Passages in the Life of Colonel Gardiner*, and his *Family Expositor*, are all popular and standard works. Dr. Doddridge died at Lisbon in 1751.

JOHN WESLEY, born in 1703 at Epworth, in Lincolnshire, was famous as the most eminent of the founders of Methodism. He was educated at the Charter-house and at Christ Church, Oxford, and afterwards became Fellow of Lincoln College. There, with his younger



brother Charles, he joined a few seriously-disposed students in private meetings for prayer and in visiting the sick and poor. In conjunction with George Whitefield, a celebrated pulpit orator, whose eloquence at the time startled thousands, he travelled about and preached with an earnestness little understood in that day. His best-known works are his *Journal* and his *Hymns*, in the latter of which his brother gave him important aid. John Wesley died in 1791.

THOMAS REID, born in 1710 at Strachan, in Kincardineshire, held in succession the professorships of Moral Philosophy at Aberdeen and Glasgow. His *Inquiry into the Human Mind* (1764) was written as a reply to Hume's sceptical doctrines and the "ideal theory" of Berkeley. *Essays on the Intellectual and Active Powers of Man* came afterwards from his pen. Reid died in 1796.

LAURENCE STERNE, author of *Tristram Shandy* and *The Sentimental Journey*, was born in 1713 at Clonmel. Educated at Cambridge, he entered the Church, becoming rector of Sutton and a prebendary of York. The living of Stillington also added to his income after his marriage. The publication of *Tristram Shandy*, beginning in 1760, closed in 1767. His *Sentimental Journey* was the fruit of his second Continental tour, undertaken in 1765. Uncle Toby, Corporal Trim, Dr. Slop, Yorick the parson, the widow Wadman, and Susannah are the leading creations of his imagination. Fine humour and delicate pathos appear in Sterne's works; but the grace of these is often marred by the affectation of his style and the frequent indecency. He has been charged with wholesale pillaging from Burton and other old authors. Sterne died in 1768 in his lodgings in Bond Street, London.

DAVID GARRICK, the famous actor and theatrical manager, employed his pen sometimes in the writing of plays, of which the best are *The Lying Valet* and *Miss in her Teens*. Born at Hereford in 1717, Garrick came up to London with Johnson, studied law, em-

barked afterwards in business as a wine merchant, but found his fitting sphere in 1741, when he became an actor by profession. He died in 1779.

HORACE WALPOLE, the third son of the well-known statesman, was born in 1717. He sat in Parliament for twenty-six years, but never made any figure as a politician. Much of his time and his snug income of £4,000 a year went in the decoration of his villa at Twickenham, well known as Strawberry Hill. His tastes were eminently Gothic. Not content with realizing a Gothic mansion in the turrets and stained-glass windows of Strawberry Hill, he wrote a singular Gothic romance, called *The Castle of Otranto*. But his racy, sparkling *Letters* and memoirs of his own time, unrivalled in their way, gave him his chief title to a place among the best English writers. Walpole, who became Earl of Orford in 1791, died six years later.

HUGH BLAIR, born at Edinburgh in 1718, is best remembered for his polished *Sermons* and his *Rhetorical Lectures*. Having filled in succession the pulpits of three Edinburgh churches, and held an honoured place in the best circles of that city, he died there in 1800.

GILBERT WHITE, a country clergyman, born in 1720, has made his Hampshire parish well known through all the land by his charming book, *The Natural History of Selborne*. He has painted, in sweet and natural language, the busy life of nature around his daily walks. White died in 1793.

SAMUEL FOOTE, born in 1720 and educated at Oxford, shone as an actor and dramatic writer. In 1747 he commenced his theatrical career. *The Minor* and *The Mayor of Garratt* may be named among the twenty plays he gave to the English stage. Foote, who was unrivalled for a mimicry that did not spare the chief characters of his own day, died in 1777.

SIR WILLIAM BLACKSTONE, a celebrated lawyer, born in London in 1723, published in 1765-69 a popular law-book, entitled *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, which is still reckoned the great standard work

on that subject. He died in 1780, being then a judge in the Court of Common Pleas.

ADAM SMITH was born in 1723 at Kirkcaldy, in Fifeshire. He was Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow, and afterwards a Commissioner of Customs. His great work, *The Wealth of Nations*, showing that *labour* is the only source of the opulence of nations, laid the foundation of the important science of Political Economy. This book appeared in 1776. Adam Smith had previously published a metaphysical work, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. He died in 1790.

JUNIUS, the *nom de plume* of an unknown writer, who wrote in the *Public Advertiser* a series of political *Letters*, commencing January 21, 1769. For fierce invective, piercing, brilliant sarcasm and appropriate imagery, these *Letters* remain unrivalled. Who Junius was is still a mystery, although Sir Philip Francis, born at Dublin in 1740, who was chief clerk in the War Office between 1763 and 1772, is the man in whose favour the evidence is strongest.

ADAM FERGUSON, who was born in 1723, held in succession two professorships in the University of Edinburgh. He wrote, among other works, *Essay on Civil Society* and *The History of the Roman Republic*. He died in 1816.

JAMES BOSWELL, born in 1740, was the son of a Scottish judge. Attaching himself to Dr. Johnson, he took notes of the great man's conversation, which he afterwards embodied in his famous *Life of Johnson*. No better biography has ever been written. Boswell died in 1795.

WILLIAM PALEY, born at Peterborough in 1743, having received his higher education at Christ's College, Cambridge, entered the Church of England, in which he rose to be Archdeacon of Carlisle. His chief works were *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1785), *Horæ Paulinæ* (1790), *View of the Evidences of Christianity* (1794), and *Natural Theology* (1802). He died in 1805.

## EIGHTH ERA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

FROM THE DEATH OF JOHNSON IN 1784 A.D. TO THE  
DEATH OF LANDOR IN 1864 A.D.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### SOME NOTES ON POETRY AND CRITICISM.

WHEN we turn from Milton's *Paradise Lost* to Macaulay's *History of England*, we perceive at once a difference in the language of the two. The one we call poetry ; the other prose. And when we recollect that we do not talk—at least most of us do not talk—to our friends in the same style as that in which Milton describes the Council of Infernal Peers, or Macaulay the Relief of Londonderry, we perceive that language assumes a third form in the conversation that prevails around our dinner tables or upon our country walks. Of the three shapes that language takes—poetry, literary prose, colloquial prose—poetry is undoubtedly the chief.

Taking English poetry in the common sense of the word, as a peculiar form of language, we find that it differs from prose mainly in having a *regular succession of accented syllables*. In short, it possesses *metre* as its chief characteristic feature. Every line is divided into so many *feet*, composed of short and long syllables arranged according to certain laws of prosody. With a regular footfall the voice steps or marches along the line, keeping time like the soldier

on drill, or the musician among his bars. In many languages syllables have a *quantity*, which makes them intrinsically long or short ; but in English poetry that syllable alone is long on which an *accent* falls. Poets therefore, in the use of that licence which they have, or take, sometimes shift an accent to suit their measure. *The inversion of the order of words*, within certain limits, is a necessary consequence of throwing language into a metrical form. Poetry, then, differs from prose, in the first place, in having metre ; and, as a consequence of this, in adopting an unusual arrangement of words and phrases. The object of inverting the order, however, is often not so much to suit the metre as to give additional emphasis or rhetorical effect.

But we find more than this in poetry, else poetry and verse are one and the same thing. We must have, in addition to the metrical form, the use of uncommon words and turns of expression, to lift the language above the level of written prose. Shakespeare, instead of saying, as he would no doubt have done in telling a ghost story to his wife, "The clock then striking one," puts into the mouth of the sentinel, Bernardo, "*The bell then beating one.*" When Thomson describes the spring-ploughing, the ox becomes a *steer*, the plough is the *shining share*, and the upturned earth appears in his verse as the *glebe*. The use of periphrase (the round-about mode of expression) here comes largely to the poet's aid. Birds are *children of the sky*, *songsters of the grove*, *tuneful choirs*, etc. ; ice is a *crystal floor*, or a *sheet of polished steel*. These are almost all figurative forms, and it is partly by the abundant use of *figures* that the higher level of speech is gained.

Yet there is something beyond all this. Smoothly the metre may flow on, without a hitch or hindrance—brilliantly the tropes may cluster in each line—lofty as a page of the *Rambler* may be the tone of the faultless speech—yet, for all, the composition may fall short of true poetry. There is a something, an essence. which

most of us can feel when present, or at once detect the lack of, which is yet entirely indefinable. We are as little able to define the essence of poetry as to describe the fragrance of a rose, or the nature of that mysterious power which shows itself in a flash of lightning and draws the needle towards the north. Let us be content to enjoy the sweet effect of that most subtle cause, which has baffled the acutest thinkers in their attempts to give it "a local habitation and a name." Lying, as it does, in the thought, we can no more express it in words than we can assign a shape or colour to the human soul. It is the electric current of the soul, streaming always through the world of thought and speech and writing, flashing out occasionally into the lightning play of true genius. Some minds are highly charged with the brilliant essence—*positive* minds, an electrician would call them; others are *negative* to the last degree. Some minds, as good conductors, can easily receive and give out the flow of thought; very many have no conducting power at all, being incapable alike of enjoying the pleasures of poetry, or of communicating those pleasures to other minds.

All poetry, so far as its form goes, may be classed, for purposes of convenience, under three heads—Epic, Dramatic, and Lyric. Blair defines the Epic poem to be "a recital of some illustrious enterprise in a poetic form." To this it may be added that the epic poem is generally composed in the highest form of verse that the prosody of the language possesses—in a word, in the *heroic* measure of the tongue. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is undoubtedly the great epic of the English tongue, founded upon one of the loftiest themes that could employ any pen, and written in that stately blank verse, that noble iambic pentameter, which holds the place in our tongue that is held in Greek and Latin by the hexameter of the *Iliad* and the *Æneid*.

Dramatic poetry assumes the form that we com-



monly call a play, breaking into the two branches—Tragedy and Comedy. We can easily single out a great example here among our English authors; for one name—that of Shakespeare—stands far above the crowd of his brother dramatists. Without being at all strictly true, there is a good deal of sense in a familiar mode of distinguishing tragedy from comedy—namely, that a tragedy completes its plot with the *death* of the principal characters, while a comedy is sure to end in their *marriage*. The tragedy, like the epic poem, generally adopts the leading measure of the tongue; the language of prose better suits the lower level of comedy, which depicts the scenes of everyday life rather than the great sufferings or great crimes that form the proper material for a tragic poem. A tragedy, in its old form, contains five acts, each act consisting of a variable number of scenes. The third, or central act, is the natural place for the *crisis* of the plot; and the fifth for the *catastrophe*, or wind-up of the whole. Thus in *Hamlet* the play-scene and the fencing-scene are so arranged that we have a central point as well as a final point of interest; and in *Julius Cæsar* the murder at the Capitol and the battle of Philippi are placed upon the same artistic principle. By writers of the classical school much attention is paid to preserving the three unities of action, place, and time. The need of making all the incidents tend to one great centre of the plot, and thus preserving the unity of action, is very manifest; for nothing is more confusing than the attempt to carry on several plots within the same play. But the need of sticking always to one place and of confining the time supposed to pass in the dramatic story to the few hours actually spent in the representation of the play, does not so manifestly appear, when we find our greatest dramatist continually violating both of these unities without in the least marring the effect of his magnificent creations.

Of Lyric poetry, which is composed chiefly of songs

and short poems such as might be set to music, the works of Robert Burns afford a brilliant example. The lyric is the expression of some sudden emotion in a form associated with music. It is a cry of pain or joy rather than a constructive expression of such passions.

We have used the word "school" in speaking of poetry. It is applied, as well in literature as in art, to a set of men whose works are founded on a certain known principle which appears in all as a distinctive feature. Thus we have that Metaphysical or Unnatural school, of which the poet Donne was the head; we have the Artificial or French school, represented by Dryden and Pope; the Transition school, of which Thomson, Gray, and Collins are good specimens; the Lake school, deriving its name from the fact that its founders—Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge—lived for the most part among the lakes of northern England; and the Pre-Raphaelite school, of which William Morris, Rossetti, and Swinburne are exemplars. These are the "schools" to which most frequent reference is made by critics.

We close this rambling chapter with another note. Two metaphysical words, *objective* and *subjective*, have been much used of late in reference to the poetic treatment of a theme. The former expresses chiefly the picturing of outward life, as perceived by the senses of the observer or realized by his fancy: of this style, Scott is one of the greatest masters. The latter denotes that kind of poetry which gives, instead of the outward scene, the various thoughts and feelings excited by it in the poet's mind. For example, let a *deserted house* be the subject. The objective poet paints the moss-grown steps, the damp-stained walls, the garden tangling with a wilderness of weeds, the rusty hinges of the door, the broken or dirt-incrusted panes of the closed windows; while the subjective poet broods over the probable history of its scattered tenants, or, attracted by a solemn resemblance, con-

tures up the image of a human body—this house of clay we all inhabit—deserted by its immortal inmate, its eyes, “those windows of the soul,” closed and sealed up in the long sleep of death.

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## CHAPTER II.

EDWARD GIBBON.

Born 1737 A.D. . . . . Died 1794 A.D.

ON an October evening in the year 1764, a young English gentleman of twenty-seven resolved to write a book of history. His own words tell us of the romantic circumstances in which the great resolve was made:—

“As I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started into my mind.”

The same man, Edward Gibbon, has thus described the completion of his great work at Lausanne, when he had passed his fiftieth year:—

“It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion; and that, whatsoever

might be the future date of my *History*, the life of the historian must be short and precarious."

Gibbon was born in the year 1737 at Putney, in Surrey. The delicate boy received much of his early education from his aunt; and when he went to Westminster School at the age of twelve, ill health prevented him from giving very close attention to his studies. In 1752 he became a gentleman-commoner of Magdalen College, Oxford, arriving at that seat of learning, as he tells us himself, "with a stock of erudition that might have puzzled a doctor, and a degree of ignorance of which a schoolboy would have been ashamed." The key to this statement we find in the fact that, while too ill for study during his schooldays, he had been devouring works of all sorts, especially enjoying with the keenest relish books of history and geography. As was the case with Walter Scott, the mind of the youthful invalid never lost the colouring with which these sick-bed readings had saturated it. At Oxford, Gibbon led an idle life for fourteen months, when, as the result of his private reading, he turned to the Roman Catholic Church. This change closed his university career.

After spending a year in the house of a Protestant clergyman at Lausanne, in Switzerland, where his father had placed him, he returned to the Protestant Church, expressing his belief in the 1754 commonly accepted truths of Christianity. A.D. But there is reason to believe that any change he made was made as a mere matter of form. The truth seems to be that Gibbon had read himself into a callousness to all creeds; and in his *History* he makes very light indeed of Christianity as a motive power in the civilization of man.

His five years at Lausanne made him a perfect master of French, and considerably advanced his neglected Latin studies. Some time after his return to England he published his first work, a little French treatise entitled *Essai sur l'Etude de la Littérature*,

which, in England at least, was soon forgotten. Acting for a while as captain in the Hampshire Militia, he gained considerable insight into modern military tactics ; and we can easily fancy the great historian of the Roman Empire pausing, pen in hand, as he sat in after years in his summer-house by the blue waters of Lake Lemán, writing the story of some mediæval battle, to think of the days when he used to drill his company in the English barrack-yard.

When his father died in 1770, leaving him an estate much hampered with debt, he settled in London, and began to write. From the outset of the work he felt the magnitude and difficulty of the theme. All was dark and doubtful. Three times he composed the first chapter, and twice he composed the second and third, before he felt satisfied with them ; but as he advanced, what seemed to be a chaos of tangled facts, mixed in hopeless confusion, grew under his shaping hand into an orderly and beautiful narrative ; and before he had gone very deep into his subject his gorgeous and stately style had grown so familiar to his pen that he made no second copy of what he wrote, but sent the first manuscript direct to the printer. In 1776, when

he had been already two years in Parliament as 1776 member for Liskeard, the first volume of *The A.D. Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* was published, and the author sprang at once into literary fame. In five years (1781) the second and third volumes made their appearance ; soon after which the historian, disappointed in his hopes of a permanent government post, retired to the house of a literary friend at Lausanne, where he wrote the rest of the work.

His life at Lausanne was simple and studious. Rising before eight, he was called from his study to an English breakfast at nine. He then shut himself up among his books and papers till half-past one, when he dressed for the two o'clock Swiss dinner, at which a friend or two often joined the table. Light reading,

chess, or visiting filled up the interval between dinner and the assemblies. A quiet game of whist and a supper of bread and cheese passed the evening hours, and eleven o'clock saw all in bed. This life, with slight interruption, Gibbon lived for the four years which he spent in the completion of his great work. After the publication of the last volumes, which he saw through the press in 1788, he returned to Lausanne, and did not leave it until the death of Lady Sheffield in 1793 brought him hastily to London, in order to console the bereaved husband, who was his most intimate friend. In little more than six months after he had left his Swiss retirement, he died in London of a disease which had long been preying on his strength (January 16, 1794).

Viewed simply as a literary performance, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* must be regarded, in spite of its defects and errors, as the noblest historical work in the English language. When we remember the immensity of the subject—the history, during nearly thirteen centuries, not only of the two great branches of the Roman Empire, but of all the various nations that played a part in the grand drama of which Rome and Constantinople were the central scenes—we are struck with astonishment at the courage of the mind that could grapple with a theme so gigantic. We think of Gibbon, sitting down to compose that memorable first chapter for the first time, as of some strapping woodsman, who, on the outskirts of a spreading forest, strikes his axe deep into the bark of the first tree. A wilderness of tangling boughs and thorny underwood, pathless and unexplored, lies stretching out before his gaze. But day by day the clearing grows wider. The fallen timber is shaped for use and beauty. The corn patch waves its golden plumes every season in a larger circle. Gardens and farms smile where before the sunlight could scarcely shine through a rank, unfruitful thicket.

From the reign of the Antonines to the fall of Con-



stantinople the narrative extends, filling much of that great gap which long severed the history of ancient Rome from the history of modern Europe. The style is lofty, musical, sometimes pompous in its gorgeous stateliness. No man has better understood the power of the picturesque in historical composition; and throughout the entire work the law of historical *perspective*, by which events and characters receive their due proportion of space, is wonderfully maintained. From the range of his deep and varied reading he drew materials for the splendid panorama he has unfolded to our view. The manners and customs of peoples, the geography of countries, the science of war, the systems of law, the progress of the arts, are all woven with masterly skill into the brilliant tissue of events.

#### THE ATTACK ON CONSTANTINOPLE.

At daybreak, without the customary signal of the morning gun, the Turks assaulted the city by sea and land; and the similitude of a twined or twisted thread has been applied to the closeness and continuity of their line of attack. The foremost rank consisted of the refuse of the host—a voluntary crowd, who fought without order or command; of the feebleness of age or childhood, of peasants and vagrants, and of all who had joined the camp in the blind hope of plunder and martyrdom. The common impulse drove them onwards to the wall: the most audacious to climb were instantly precipitated; and not a dart, not a bullet, of the Christians was idly wasted on the accumulated throng. But their strength and ammunition were wasted in this laborious defence. The ditch was filled with the bodies of the slain—they supported the footsteps of their companions; and of this devoted vanguard the death was more serviceable than the life. Under their respective bashaws and sanjaks the troops of Anatolia and Romania were successively led to the charge: their progress was various and doubtful; but, after a conflict of two hours, the Greeks still maintained and improved their advantage; and the voice of the Emperor was heard encouraging his soldiers to achieve, by a last effort, the deliverance of their country. In that fatal moment the janizaries arose, fresh, vigorous, and invincible. The Sultan himself on horseback, with an iron mace in his hand, was the spectator and judge of their valour. He was surrounded by ten thousand of his domestic troops, whom he reserved for the decisive occasion; and the tide of battle was directed and impelled by his voice and eye. His numerous ministers of justice were posted behind the line, to urge, to restrain, to punish; and if danger was in the front, shame and inevitable death were in the rear, of the fugitives. The cries of fear and of pain were drowned in the martial music of drums, trumpets, and attaballs; and ex-

perience has proved, that the mechanical operation of sounds, by quickening the circulation of the blood and spirits, will act on the human machine more forcibly than the eloquence of reason and honour. From the lines, the galleys, and the bridge, the Ottoman artillery thundered on all sides; and the camp and city, the Greeks and the Turks, were involved in a cloud of smoke, which could only be dispelled by the final deliverance or destruction of the Roman Empire.

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## CHAPTER III.

ROBERT BURNS.

Born 1759 A.D. . . . . Died 1796 A.D.

ROBERT BURNS was an Ayrshire ploughman. But beneath the "hodden gray" of the peasant's dress there shone poetic fire as pure and bright as the world has ever seen. The faults of the man are forgotten for the sake of a surpassing music, which, sounding first from the smoky interior of a thatched cottage, has spread its sweetness into every home, not in Britain only, but wherever the English tongue is heard. Yet other and sterner scenes than the domestic circle are even more deeply blessed by this enchanting influence. Soldiers on the dusty march or round the logs of the bivouac fire, sailors in the long dark nights at sea amid tumultuous waves and creaking cordage, trappers and woodmen in the ancient forests of the New World, miners crushing quartz in the golden bed of the Sacramento or the Fraser, bushmen riding from huge flock to flock over the boundless pastures of Australia, have all had their loneliness cheered, and the crust which gathers on the human heart through years of hardship melted into tears, by the gentle or spirit-stirring magic of Robert Burns's songs. No lyrist goes home to the heart so straight as he.

Thirty-seven years of sorrow and struggle, chequered with one or two brief flickering gleams of apparent prosperity, made up the poet's span of life. He was born on January 25, 1759, in a cottage not far from

the Bridge of Doon, in the Ayrshire parish of Alloway. His father, a gardener, who had struggled into a humble business as a nurseryman on his own account, built with his own hands the clay walls within which Robert first saw the light. Going to school at six years of age, the boy battled his way stoutly through the mysteries of English reading, pot-hooks and hangers, the multiplication table, and other sorrows of the young, until at eleven years of age he had acquired a very fair degree of elementary education. It was all his good father could give him ; and when it became necessary to employ the young hands in the labour of a farm, Mount Oliphant, to which the family removed in 1765, some occasional evening studies rubbed away the rust that *will* come, and added a little to the scanty stock of knowledge already gained. "A fortnight's French," which he was fond of parading in his letters, and a summer quarter at land-surveying, completed all the instruction the poet ever got, beyond what he was able to pick up from a few books that lay on his humble shelf. *The Spectator*, Alexander Pope, and Allan Ramsay were there ; and by-and-by Thomson, Shenstone, Sterne, and Mackenzie joined the little company of silent friends.

But out on the fields of Mossgiel, amid the birds and wildflowers of a Lowland farm, he learned his finest lessons, and conned them with all his earnest heart as he held the handles of the plough. A little heap of leaves and stubble, torn to pieces by the ruthless ploughshare, one cold November day, exposes to the frosty wind a field-mouse, that starts frightened from the ruin. The tender heart of the poet-ploughman swells into song. And again, when April is weeping on the field, the crushing of a crimson-tipped daisy beneath the up-turned furrow draws from the same heart a compassionate lament. Poems like those to the mouse and the daisy are true wildflowers, touched with a fairy grace and breathing a delicate fragrance, such as the blossoms of no cultured garden can ever boast.

But the ploughing that led to the production of these poems was profitless in other respects. In vain Robert and his brother Gilbert toiled "like galley-slaves." In vain their mother looked after the dairy and the eggs. Things became so bad on the farm that the poet resolved to sail for Jamaica, in the hope of obtaining a stewardship on some sugar-plantation. Desirous both to raise the needful funds and to leave behind some lasting memorial of himself, which might prevent his name from being utterly forgotten in the land of his birth, he had six hundred copies of his poems printed at Kilmarnock and 1786 scattered among the shops of a few book- A.D. sellers. The little volume went off rapidly; and nearly twenty guineas chinked in the poet's purse after paying all expenses of the edition. His passage was taken in the first ship that was to sail from the Clyde; his chest was on the way to Greenock; a farewell to the banks of Ayr was breathed in his touching song, *The gloomy night is gathering fast*, when a letter changed the current of his life, and kept the poet in his native land. It was to a friend of Burns from Dr. Blacklock of Edinburgh, himself a poet, giving such praise as the modest lad had not dared to hope for.

True to his impulsive soul, he turned his back at once on the Clyde, and in November 1786 arrived in Edinburgh with very few shillings, and not a letter of recommendation to win a friend. But his book, which was there before him, unlocked the doors of the first Edinburgh mansions to the peasant who had so sweet a song. Burns became the rage. Peers, grave historians, popular novelists, moral philosophers, listened with applause to his fresh and brilliant talk; asked select friends to meet him at dinner; subscribed for the second edition of his poems, by which he cleared nearly £500; and then, when the gloss had worn off their plaything, and some fresh novelty had sprung up among them, this man was looked coldly on,

neglected, and forgotten—but not until the poison of a capricious flattery had sown deadly seeds in the poet's soul.

The rest of his life-story, except for the immortal works his later years produced, is a tale of deep sadness, and had best be briefly told. Having taken the farm of Ellisland, about a hundred acres on the Nith, not far from Dumfries, he married Jean Armour and settled down to a country life once more. This phase of his career opened in June 1788. Some time afterwards, by the interest of a friend, he obtained the office of exciseman for the district in which he lived. The sum he derived from this employment—never above £70 a year—but ill repaid him for the time its duties cost and the dangers of that unsettled, convivial life to which his excitable nature was thus exposed. After struggling for more than three years with the stubborn soil of Ellisland, and vainly trying to raise good crops while he looked after the whisky stills, he gave up the farm, and in 1791 went to live at Dumfries upon his slender income as a gauger.

A third edition of his poems, enriched with the inimitable *Tam o' Shanter*, which he had written at Ellisland, came out two years later. But there were then not many sands of his life-glass to run. Sickness, debt, "the proud man's contumely," and the bitter dregs of those habits to which his ardent, passionate nature was but too prone, cast heavy clouds upon the closing scene of his short life. He died at Dumfries on July 21, 1796.

It is chiefly for his *Songs* that the memory of Robert Burns is so dear to his countrymen. But the lines already noticed *To a Daisy* and *To a Mouse*; the beautiful domestic picture of *The Cottar's Saturday Night*; the noble *Elegy on Captain Matthew Henderson*; the mad, low-life revelry of *The Jolly Beggars*; and, above all, the serio-comic tale of *Tam o' Shanter*, with its market-day carouse, its ride through the stormy midnight, its horrible witch-dance within the old Kirk

of Alloway, and its thrilling escape of the rash farmer and his old gray mare—these are works which fully display the versatile genius of Robert Burns, and raise him to the first rank among poets. All his best poems were written in Lowland Scotch, and his English verses are, as a rule, marred by the worst conventions of the eighteenth-century manner.

## TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,  
 Thou's met me in an evil hour :  
 For I maun crush amang the stoure  
     Thy slender stem :  
 To spare thee now is past my power,  
     Thou bonnie gem.

Alas ! it's no thy neibor sweet,  
 The bonnie Lark, companion meet,  
 Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,  
     Wi' spreckled breast,  
 When upward-springing, blithe, to greet  
     The purpling east !

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north  
 Upon thy early, humble birth ;  
 Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth  
     Amid the storm,  
 Scarce reared above the parent earth  
     Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,  
 High sheltering woods and wa's maun shield ;  
 But thou beneath the random bield  
     O' clod or stane  
 Adorns the histie stibble-field,  
     Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,  
 Thy snawie bosom sun-ward spread,  
 Thou lifts thy unassuming head  
     In humble guise ;  
 But now the share uptears thy bed,  
     And low thou lies !

Such is the fate of artless maid,  
 Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade !  
 By love's simplicity betrayed,  
     And guileless trust,  
 Till she, like thee, all soiled, is laid  
     Low i' the dust.



Such is the fate of simple bard,  
 On life's rough ocean luckless starred !  
 Unskilful he to note the card  
     Of prudent lore,  
 Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,  
     And whelm him o'er.

Such fate to suffering worth is given,  
 Who long with wants and woes has striven,  
 By human pride or cunning driven  
     To misery's brink,  
 Till wrenched of every stay but Heaven,  
     He, ruined, sink !

Even thou who mourn'st the daisy's fate,  
 That fate is thine—no distant date ;  
 Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,  
     Full on thy bloom,  
 Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight  
     Shall be thy doom !

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#### MARY MORISON.

O Mary, at thy window be ;  
 It is the wished, the trysted hour.  
 Those smiles and glances let me see  
 That make the miser's treasure poor.  
 How blithely wad I bide the stoure,  
 A weary slave frae sun to sun,  
 Could I the rich reward secure—  
 The lovely Mary Morison !

Yestreen, when to the trembling string  
 The dance gaed through the lighted ha',  
 To thee my fancy took its wing—  
 I sat, but neither heard nor saw.  
 Though this was fair, and that was braw,  
 And yon the toast of a' the town,  
 I sighed, and said amang them a',  
 " Ye are na Mary Morison."

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace  
 Wha for thy sake wad gladly die ?  
 Or canst thou break that heart of his  
 Whase only faut is loving thee ?  
 If love for love thou wilt not gi'e,  
 At least be pity to me shown ;  
 A thought ungentle canna be  
 The thought o' Mary Morison.

## CHAPTER IV.

EDMUND BURKE.

Born 1729 A.D. . . . . Died 1797 A.D.

EDMUND BURKE, first of our political writers and among the greatest of our orators, was born in 1729 in a house on Arran Quay, Dublin. His father was an attorney, who enjoyed a large and thriving practice. Many of Edmund's early days were spent in the county of Cork, nor far from the ruined walls of Kilcolman, where his namesake Spenser had lived and written, and whence the poet had fled a broken-hearted man. In his twelfth year young Burke was sent to school at Ballitore, in Kildare; and there, under a skilful master, Abraham Shackleton the Quaker, he studied for about two years.

Trinity College, Dublin, where his picture holds an honourable place on the wall of the Examination Hall, received him as a student in 1743. To shine at the English Bar was his young ambition; and so he was entered at the Middle Temple in 1750. But he never became a lawyer; his great genius soon found its fitting sphere in a statesman's life. In the meantime, however, he began to write his way to fame. An imitation of Lord Bolingbroke's style, *The Vindication of Natural Society*, was followed by his well-known *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*. Having married Miss Nugent of Bath on the strength of an allowance of £200 a year from his father and what his pen could make, he formed additional literary engagements with the bookseller Dodsley. For a sketch of American history, in two volumes, he received fifty guineas; and was paid at the rate of £100 a volume for the *Annual Register*, which first appeared in 1759.

His entrance on political life may be dated from his appointment in 1759 as private secretary to "Single Speech" Hamilton, who then became Chief

Secretary for Ireland. The atmosphere of Dublin Castle did not long agree with the clever young Whig, who threw up a lately conferred pension of £300 a year, broke with Hamilton, and returned to London, where a brilliant career awaited him.

Having been appointed private secretary to the Marquis of Rockingham, who became Prime Minister in 1765, Burke shortly afterwards entered Parliament as member for Wendover, in Buckinghamshire. At the age of thirty-six he stood A.D. for the first time on the floor of St. Stephen's Chapel, whose walls were to ring so often during

the next eight-and-twenty years with the rolling periods of his eloquence, and the peals of acclamation bursting alike from friend and foe. Among the great men who then sat upon the benches of the ancient hall, Burke at once took a foremost place. The triumphs of his eloquent tongue we cannot follow here, for it is ours to mark only the achievements of his pen. In the stirring years of the American War he poured out the opulence of a richly-stored mind in many noble orations; but the crown of his glory as an orator was won in the great Hall at Westminster, where he uttered the thunders of his eloquence in

the impeachment of Warren Hastings, Governor-General of India. Opening the case A.D. in February 1788 in a speech of four days, he continued his statement during certain days of April, and wound up his charges with an address, which began on the 28th of May and lasted for the nine succeeding days. As he spoke, the scenery of the East—rice-field and jungle, gilded temple and broad-bosomed river, with a sky of heated copper glowing over all—unfolded itself in a brilliant picture before the kindled fancy of his audience; and when the sufferings of the tortured Hindus and the desolation of their wasted fields were painted, as only Burke could paint in words, the effect of the sudden contrast upon those who heard him was like

the shock of a Leyden jar. Ladies sobbed and screamed, handkerchiefs and smelling-bottles were in constant use, and "some were even carried out in fits." As an argument it was grossly unfair; but as an effort of eloquence it was beyond praise.

Another great subject filled his thoughts during his last years. He foresaw the hurricane that was blackening over France, and, when it 1790 broke in fury, he wrote his greatest work, en- A.D. titled *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, in which he lifts his voice to warn England against cherishing at home the fatal seeds that were bearing so terrible a harvest across the waves of the Channel.

From the ceaseless toil of a statesman's life, Burke sometimes stole away to his gardens at Gregories, near Beaconsfield, where, so far back as 1768, he had purchased an estate for £20,000. A heavy blow at last fell on him. His son Richard, who had been for thirty-six years the light of his eyes, sank under a rapid consumption. In his retreat at Beaconsfield he still continued to write, producing during his last two years some of his best works. A pension having been conferred on the statesman, two of the peers thought fit to find fault with the richly-deserved honour. It would have been wise for the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale to let the old lion alone. The *Letter to a Noble Lord*, called forth by this ungenerous attack, stands next to the *French Revolution* as a specimen of Burke's powerful style. Other works of his last years were *Letters on a Regicide Peace* and *Observations on the Conduct of the Minority*. At last he began to sink daily, for 1797 his heart was still bleeding for his son. In A.D. vain for four months the waters of Bath were tried. He returned home to die, and was laid in a vault under Beaconsfield Church.

## MARIE ANTOINETTE.

(FROM THE "FRENCH REVOLUTION.")

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France, then the Dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in—glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendour, and joy. Oh, what a revolution! and what a heart must I have to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream, when she added titles of veneration to those of distant, enthusiastic, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone! It is gone—that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness.

## CHAPTER V.

WILLIAM COWPER.

Born 1731 A.D. . . . . Died 1800 A.D.

THE Reverend Doctor John Cowper, a royal chaplain, the son of a judge, and the nephew of a lord chancellor, was rector of Great Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire, when his son William was born there in 1731. A tender mother—a lady of noble birth—watched the infancy and childhood of the boy. Her hand it was that wrapped his little scarlet cloak around him, and filled his little bag with biscuits every morning before he went to his first school. By her knee was his happiest place, where he often amused himself by mark-

ing out the flowered pattern of her dress on paper with a pin, taking a child's delight in his simple skill. He was only six years old when his mother died. More than fifty years after the day on which a sad little face, looking from the nursery window, had seen a dark hearse moving slowly from the door, an old man, smitten with incurable madness, but then enjoying a brief lucid interval, bent over a picture, and saw the never-forgotten image of that kindest earthly friend, from whom he had so long been severed, but whom he was so soon to join in the sorrowless land. There are no more touching and beautiful lines in English poetry or prose than Cowper's *Verses to his Mother's Picture*.

The circumstances to which his morbid nervousness and melancholy may most of all be traced is full of warning for the young. The poor motherless boy of six was sent to a boarding school at Markyate Street, in Hertfordshire, where a senior pupil led the child a terrible life for two years, crushing down his young spirit with persecution. It was a happy release when he was removed from this scene of misery to the house of an eminent oculist for the treatment of his eyes, which the poor little fellow had probably cried into a state of violent inflammation. His seven years at Westminster School were less unpleasant to the timid boy, though there too he had to take his full share of buffeting and sneers.

The law being his appointed profession, he entered an attorney's office at eighteen, and there spent three years. This period and a few succeeding years formed almost the only spot of sunshine in the poet's life. Many a hearty laugh echoed through the gloomy office, where Cowper and his fellow-apprentice—afterwards Lord Chancellor Thurlow—made believe that they were studying the English law. Called to the Bar in 1754, he lived for some time an idle, agreeable life in his Temple chambers, writing a little for the serials of the day, and taking a share in the



wit-combats of the "Nonsense Club," which consisted nearly altogether of Westminster men. It was during this part of his life that he fell in love with his cousin Theodora—a passion the unfortunate issue of which gave a darker colouring to the naturally sombre spirit of the young lawyer.

A relative presented him in the year 1763 to a valuable clerkship in the Lords, which required the holder of the office to appear frequently before the House. The idea of such a thing was, in Cowper's own words, "mortal poison" to his shrinking nature.

A more private post—that of Clerk of the 1763 Journals of the House of Lords—was then A.D. substituted for the former gift; but, most unexpectedly, the presentee was summoned to the Bar to be examined as to his fitness for the post. Obligated to face the future horror of this examination, while for months he worked hard to prepare himself for passing it creditably, his mind gave way—he tried to kill himself; and a private asylum at St. Albans became for eighteen months the refuge of the afflicted man.

A deep religious melancholy was the form of his mental disease; an awful terror that his soul was lost for ever, beyond the power of redemption, hung in a thick night-cloud upon his life. Three times after the first attack the madness returned—for nearly four years previous to 1776, for about six months in 1787, and during his last six years, from 1794 to 1800.

The friendship of the Unwins was the great blessing of his life. At Huntingdon he became intimate with this kind family, then consisting of the Reverend Morley Unwin, his wife, son, and daughter; and the friendship grew so strong that Cowper went 1766 in 1766 to live in their calm and cheerful home.

A.D. The good clergyman was killed in the following year by a fall from his horse, and the widow and her daughter went to live at Olney, in Buckinghamshire. Thither Cowper accompanied them, for he was now unalterably one of the quiet household.

Here the timid spirit found a pleasant home. A walk with his dog by the reedy banks of the placid Ouse to admire the white and gold of the water-lilies that floated on the deep stream—a round of visits to the cottages of the neighbouring poor—the composition of some hymns for his friend John Newton, the curate of the parish—filled up his peaceful days for a time. But the terrible shadows were thickening again round his brain. A second fit of madness came in 1773, and all was dark for more than three years.

When light once more broke through the clouds, the need of some graver and more constant work made the man of fifty, who had already produced light occasional verses, take pen in hand, and sit down seriously to write a book of poems. For recreation he had his flowers, his pet hares, his landscape drawing, and his manufacture of bird-cages; but poetry now became the serious business of his life.

His first volume was issued in 1782. It contained three grave and powerful satires—*Truth*, *Table-talk*, and *Expostulation*—with poems 1782 on *Error*, *Hope*, *Charity*, and kindred subjects, A.D. written chiefly in pentameter rhymes. No great success rewarded this first instalment of Cowper's toil; but at least two men, whose good opinion was worth more than gold, saw real merit in the modest book. Johnson and Franklin recognized in the re-cluse of fifty a true poet.

But higher efforts lay before the literary hermit. The widow of Sir Robert Austen, coming to live at Olney, soon became intimate with the melancholy Cowper. To cheer him she told him the story of *John Gilpin*, whose break-neck ride became the subject of a famous ballad. In this rattling tale and other minor pieces, as well as in numberless satiric and ironical touches scattered through the mass of his poems, we catch gleams of a sunny humour lurking below the shy and sensitive moods which wrapt the

poet from public gaze. To Lady Austen, Cowper owed the origin of his greatest work, *The Task* (1785). She asked him to write some blank verse, and playfully gave him the sofa as a subject. Beginning a poem

on this homely theme, he produced the six  
1785 books of *The Task*, which took its name from  
A.D. the circumstances of its origin. From a  
humorous historical sketch of the gradual  
improvement of seats, the three-legged stool growing  
into the softly cushioned sofa, he glides into the  
pleasures of a country walk, and following out the  
natural train of thought, draws a strong contrast  
between rural and city life. The second book, en-  
titled *The Timepiece*, opens with a just and powerful  
denunciation of slavery, and proceeds to declare the  
blessings and the need of peace among the nations.  
A noble apostrophe to England, and a brilliantly  
sarcastic picture of a fashionable preacher are among  
the more striking passages of this book. Then come  
*The Garden*, *The Winter Evening*, *The Winter Morning  
Walk*, and *The Winter Walk at Noon*, full of exquisite  
description and deep kindliness. Mirrored in these  
beautiful poems, we see the peaceful recreations and  
the gentle nature of this amiable afflicted man. We  
learn to reverence him for his wisdom, to love him  
for his human tenderness, and to sympathize pitifully  
and deeply with the overshadowing sorrow of his life.

Accompanying *The Task*, which appeared in 1785  
to take the hearts of all Englishmen by storm, was  
a review of schools, entitled *Tirocinium*, strongly  
recommending private tuition in preference to educa-  
tion at a public school. The sad experience of his  
early schooldays was, without doubt, the root from  
which this poem sprang.

Dissatisfied with Pope's version of the great Greek  
epics, Cowper now undertook to translate Homer into  
English verse; and by working regularly at the rate  
of forty lines a day, he accomplished the task in a  
few years. A passing attack of his old malady laid

him by for a while during the progress of this work. The *Homer* appeared in 1791; and a revised edition, altered and corrected to a great extent, followed in 1799. Kind friends of his youth drew round the old man in his last years. His cousin, Lady Hesketh, induced him to remove to a villa at Weston, about a mile from his well-loved Olney. But the last and thickest cloud was darkening down. About 1794 the gloom of madness fell again upon his mind, and only for very brief intervals was there any light. A sad sight it must have been to see the gray-haired sufferer standing by the coffin where his faithful friend of many years—the devoted Mary Unwin—lay in her last sleep. She died in 1796; and in less than four years the gentle poet, whom her roof-tree had sheltered, and her gentle ministrings had cheered and solaced for fully thirty years, April 25, closed his eyes for ever on the earth, which 1800 had been to him indeed a place of many A.D. sorrows.

A pension of £300 a year from the king had comforted his declining days. He was able before death to revise his *Homer*, and to leave in the little poem of *The Castaway*—descriptive of the death of a sailor, who had been washed overboard in the mid Atlantic—the last sad plaint of his lyre. Already the darkness of the Valley of the Shadow of Death was on his soul when he wrote the concluding words:—

“ We perished, each alone ;  
But I beneath a rougher sea,  
And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.”

To forget Cowper's *Letters*, in a sketch of his literary life, would be unpardonable. Southey, his best biographer, calls him “ the best of English letter-writers ; ” and there is no exaggeration in the praise. Loathing from his soul, as he tells us, all affectation, he writes to his friends in simple English words, which have caught their lustre, as style must always do,

from the beauty of the thoughts expressed. A sweet, delicate humour plays throughout these *Letters*, like sunlight on a clear and pebbled stream.

# APOSTROPHE TO WINTER.

(FROM "THE TASK," BOOK IV.)

O Winter ! ruler of the inverted year,  
 Thy scattered hair with sleet like ashes filled,  
 Thy breath congealed upon thy lips, thy cheeks  
 Fringed with a beard made white with other snows  
 Than those of age, thy forehead wrapped in clouds,  
 A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne  
 A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,  
 But urged by storms along its slippery way,  
 I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,  
 And dreaded as thou art ! Thou hold'st the sun  
 A prisoner in the yet undawning east,  
 Shortening his journey between morn and noon,  
 And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,  
 Down to the rosy west. . . . .  
 No rattling wheels stop short before these gates ;  
 No powdered pert, proficient in the art  
 Of sounding an alarm, assaults these doors  
 Till the street rings ; no stationary steeds  
 Cough their own knell, while, heedless of the sound,  
 The silent circle fan themselves, and quake :  
 But here the needle plies its busy task,  
 The pattern grows ; the well-depicted flower,  
 Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,  
 Unfolds its bosom ; buds, and leaves, and sprigs,  
 And curling tendrils, gracefully disposed,  
 Follow the nimble fingers of the fair ;  
 A wreath, that cannot fade, of flowers that blow  
 With most success when all besides decay.  
 The poet's or historian's page by one  
 Made vocal for the amusement of the rest ;  
 The sprightly lyre, whose treasure of sweet sounds  
 The touch from many a trembling chord shakes out ;  
 And the clear voice symphonious, yet distinct,  
 And in the charming strife triumphant still,  
 Beguile the night, and set a keener edge  
 On female industry ;—the threaded steel  
 Flies swiftly, and unfelt the task proceeds.  
 The volume closed, the customary rites  
 Of the last meal commence. A Roman meal !  
 Such as the mistress of the world once found  
 Delicious, when her patriots of high note,  
 Perhaps by moonlight, at their humble doors,  
 And under an old oak's domestic shade,  
 Enjoyed, spare feast ! a radish and an egg.  
 Discourse ensues, not trivial, yet not dull,

Nor such as with a frown forbids the play  
 Of fancy, or proscribes the sound of mirth :  
 Nor do we madly, like an impious world,  
 Who deem religion frenzy, and the God  
 That made them an intruder on their joys,  
 Start at His awful name, or deem His praise  
 A jarring note.

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## CHAPTER VI.

JANE AUSTEN.

Born 1775 A.D. . . . . Died 1817 A.D.

THOUGH Jane Austen's novels were published anonymously, and though, in marked contrast to Fanny Burney, she died without having been sought out personally by a single man or woman of letters among her contemporaries, it is now many years since her six miniatures of fiction have been accepted as the finest artistic work ever accomplished by a woman, if not the most perfect novels in the English language. She never attempted to stir the deeper emotions of human nature, or to portray the passions in which most novelists delight ; she has given us no thrilling adventures, historical pictures, or original philosophy. Concerning the technical theories of construction or style she was apparently ignorant, and certainly indifferent. She described characters drawn directly from her own experience, and confined to a very limited class of society ; illustrated their peculiarities by a simple story ; and pointed her narrative by wit and humour. But the characterization is so perfectly natural, and the style so finely polished, that her work stands above praise. Every person in all the novels must be accepted as a living human being ; every word in conversation, narrative, or description is inevitable. Wit and humour alike satisfy the most fastidious taste.

Jane Austen, as already stated, led a quiet, uneventful life. She was the daughter of a country



clergyman of the old school, being born in the pretty parsonage of Steventon, Hampshire, in December 16, 1775, and growing up in a somewhat conventional but pleasant family circle, in which a French sister-in-law provided the only element of variety. She was devoted to her elder sister Cassandra—"the amiable Miss Austen"—and proud of her sailor brothers, facts to which her novels bear ample witness. Mr. Austen had other sons, a good deal older than Jane; and the whole family took much interest in her work, though it is very doubtful whether they had any true conception of her genius.

Cassandra and Jane went to a good boarding-school, and were rather well educated for their position; but they were no students, and, curiously enough, appear to have taken but slight interest in the stirring political events of the day.

We learn that Jane amused herself by writing—burlesques and other comic trifles—from a very early age; but she seems to have acquired maturity with a somewhat startling abruptness, which requires some further explanation than her biographers have

1796 supplied. Between October 1796 and 1798—

A.D. that is, from the ages of twenty-one to twenty-three—she wrote, practically in their final form, three complete great novels—*Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Northanger Abbey*.

Towards the close of this period her father's health must have broken down, and family matters clearly absorbed her attention. In 1801 the reverend gentleman handed over his duties to his son, and retired to Bath, where they all remained until his death in 1805. One gathers that Jane was not particularly happy in Bath, though she was able to make admirable use of her experiences among the fashionable invalids in later life. After Mr. Austen's death, the mother and daughters lived for a few years in Southampton; but they do not appear to have really settled down again to complete home life until 1809, when they took a





MEETING OF BURNS AND SCOTT IN SCIENNES HOUSE, EDINBURGH, THE  
RESIDENCE OF PROFESSOR ADAM PARSONS.

*From the picture by C. M. Hunter, R.S.A.*

house at Chawton, near Winchester, on the estate which Edward Austen had inherited from Mr. Knight of Godersham Park, who adopted him.

Here Jane herself must have recovered her serenity ; and here, again, she took up her pen, revising and publishing *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*, writing, in another almost equally short period (1811–1816), the second trio of equally immortal works—*Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, and *Persuasion*. The first two were soon published, though *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* did not appear till after her death.

Her last illness was of short duration. In May 1817 she was moved to Winchester to consult an eminent surgeon, and on the 18th of July she breathed her last. At the time of her death she was 1817 engaged on another novel ; but, though we A.D. have no reason for supposing that her powers had in any way deserted her, the portion completed is too fragmentary for final judgment.

Many industrious attempts have been made to fill in the meagre details of this curiously-placid life. Two volumes of Miss Austen's *Letters* have been given to the world ; and contemporary records, in print and manuscript, have been searched with pious enthusiasm. We know now that Miss Austen was an ideal sister (like her own heroines), an affectionate daughter, and a prime favourite with her nephews and nieces. She never allowed her work to interfere with family or parochial duties ; was always gentle, considerate, and sympathetic, but no foe to visiting, dancing, or even flirting. We are told that she wrote always on little slips of paper in the family sitting-room, and never resented interruption, though she was far too sensible and strong-minded to neglect her powers or yield to any false ideals of self-sacrifice.

Still, as Sir Henry Craik has well observed, her surroundings must have been tiresome and conventional : “ How many Eltons and Collinses, how many a Mr. Woodhouse and Miss Bates, how many a Mrs.

Jennings and Mrs. Bennet, must poor Jane Austen have endured, before she could have given them to all time as perfect types, living for us as vividly as if we had talked to and known and suffered them! . . . What must have been the anger which avenged years of pent-up provocation, under the torture of some domestic Mrs. Norris, by the concentrated sarcasm conveyed in that most consummate type of female pest!"

Jane Austen, indeed, as she herself writes of *Pride and Prejudice*, is infinitely "light and bright and sparkling;" but towards the objects of her moral indignation she can be cynical, merciless, and caustic. Without being in any way a professional champion of women's rights, she has ridiculed masculine vanity towards her own sex with unsparing vigour.

In fact, though perhaps unconsciously, Miss Austen did much to advance the position of the literary woman. For though Fanny Burney had been received with enthusiasm by society and the court, though she had shown that it was possible to be at once an author and a lady, writing as a profession was not really considered in her days quite respectable. The work and life of Jane Austen banished the world's doubts for ever.

#### EMMA.

A very few days had passed after this adventure, when Harriet came one morning to Emma with a small parcel in her hand, and after sitting down and hesitating, thus began,—

"Miss Woodhouse, if you are at leisure, I have something that I should like to tell you—a sort of confession to make; and then, you know, it will be over."

Emma was a good deal surprised, but begged her to speak. There was a seriousness in Harriet's manner which prepared her, quite as much as her words, for something more than ordinary.

"It is my duty, and I am sure it is my wish," she continued, "to have no reserves with you on this subject. As I am, happily, quite an altered creature in *one respect*, it is very fit that you should have the satisfaction of knowing it. I do not want to say more than is necessary. I am too much ashamed of having given way as I have done, and I dare say you understand me."

"Yes," said Emma, "I hope I do."

"How I could so long a time be fancying myself—" cried Harriet warmly. "It seems like madness. I can see nothing at

all extraordinary in him now. I do not care whether I meet him or not, except that, of the two, I had rather not see him; and, indeed, I would go any distance round to avoid him; but I do not envy his wife in the least. I neither admire her nor envy her, as I have done. She is very charming, I dare say, and all that; but I think her very ill-tempered and disagreeable. I shall never forget her look the other night. However, I assure you, Miss Woodhouse, I wish her no evil. No; let them be ever so happy together, it will not give me another moment's pang; and to convince you that I have been speaking truth, I am now going to destroy what I ought to have destroyed long ago—what I ought never to have kept. I know that very well”—blushing as she spoke. “However, now I will destroy it all; and it is my particular wish to do it in your presence, that you may see how rational I am grown. Cannot you guess what this parcel holds?” said she, with a conscious look.

“Not the least in the world. Did he ever give you anything?”

“No, I cannot call them gifts; but they are things that I have valued very much.”

She held the parcel towards her, and Emma read the words, “Most precious treasures,” on the top. Her curiosity was greatly excited. Harriet unfolded the parcel, and she looked on with impatience. Within abundance of silver paper was a pretty little Tunbridge-ware box, which Harriet opened. It was well lined with the softest cotton; but, excepting the cotton, Emma saw only a small piece of court-plaster.

“Now,” said Harriet, “you *must* recollect.”

“No, indeed, I do not.”

“Dear me! I should not have thought it possible you could forget what passed in this very room about court-plaster, one of the very last times we ever met in it. It was but a very few days before I had my sore throat—just before Mr. and Mrs. John Knightley came—I think the very evening. Do not you remember his cutting his finger with your new penknife, and your recommending court-plaster? But, as you had none about you, and knew I had, you desired me to supply him; and so I took mine out, and cut him a piece; but it was a great deal too large, and he cut it smaller, and kept playing some time with what was left before he gave it back to me. And so then, in my nonsense, I could not help making a treasure of it; so I put it by, never to be used, and looked at it now and then as a great treat.”

“My dearest Harriet!” cried Emma, putting her hand before her face, and jumping up, “you make me more ashamed of myself than I can bear. Remember it? Ay, I remember it all now—all, except your saving this relic. I knew nothing of that till this moment; but the cutting the finger, and my recommending court-plaster, and saying I had none about me. Oh! my sins, my sins! And I had plenty all the while in my pocket! One of my senseless tricks. I deserve to be under a continual blush all the rest of my life. Well”—sitting down again—“go on; what else?”

“And had you really some at hand yourself? I am sure I never suspected it, you did it so naturally.”

“And so you actually put this piece of court-plaster by for his sake,” said Emma, recovering from her state of shame and feeling, divided between wonder and amusement; and secretly she added



to herself, "Lord bless me! when should I ever have thought of putting by in cotton a piece of court-plaster that Frank Churchill had been pulling about? I never was equal to this."

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## CHAPTER VII.

JOHN KEATS.

Born 1795 A.D. . . . . Died 1821 A.D.

THOUGH Thomas Keats, the poet's father, had been head hostler at the Swan and Hoop, Finsbury, and took charge of the stables on marrying his master's daughter, Frances Jennings, the "brisk little man" had plenty of character, and his wife is described as a woman of unusual "talents and sense." A son of John's schoolmaster records "the warm terms in which his demeanour used to be canvassed by my parents after he had been to visit his boys."

Mr. Keats was a west country man (from Cornwall or Devonshire), and was evidently ambitious. Indeed, he thought of sending his sons to Harrow, though more prudent counsels prevailed; and they probably did quite as well at Enfield, under the Rev. John Clarke, whose own son, Charles Cowden, was destined to have considerable influence on the poet, of whom he has left us some valuable reminiscences.

Curiously enough, considering the somewhat feminine character of his face and his work—so recklessly exaggerated by contemporary critics—the most marked trait of John's boyhood (extending to student days) was a fiery temper and a passionate love of fighting. He was ever in the wars—with his own brother and with those he loved best; and it was apparently impossible to win his friendship without first facing his fists. As a child he stood with drawn sword at the door of his mother's bedroom to secure her from disturbance, since the doctor had prescribed rest.

He was extraordinarily popular among his school-

fellows, being as generous as he was quick-tempered ; and Clarke said he had " never heard a word of disapproval from any one, superior or equal, who had known him." Though not particularly intellectual, he was dogged and orderly in " the pursuit of study," frequently winning the prizes given at Enfield for " the greatest amount of voluntary work." He was at his books before seven o'clock in the morning, when regular classes began, stayed in school through intervals or play hours, and had " to be driven out by one of the masters " to take the " necessary exercise." As an older boy he also read at meal times, and acquired the loving familiarity with classic legend which marks his poetry, from Tooke's *Pantheon*, Lemprière's *Classical Dictionary*, and Spence's *Polymetis*. He did not learn Greek, and in Latin advanced no further than the *Æneid*, though, when scarcely fourteen, he is said to have detected a " feebleness in the structure " of that poem.

His father died soon after he went to Enfield, and the closing weeks of school life were given to nursing his mother. Soon after her death he was apprenticed to a Mr. Thomas Hammond, a surgeon of Edmonton, with whom he ultimately parted, as the result of a quarrel, which ended apparently in physical violence. This breaking of his indentures, however, was not the close of his medical career, as he moved to London and worked both at Guy's and St. Thomas's. He is said to have been a clever operator and an industrious student, but his thoughts were apt to wander. " The other day," said he on one occasion, " during the lecture, there came a sunbeam into the room, and with it a whole troop of creatures floating in the ray, and I was off with them to Oberon and fairyland."

Meanwhile, Charles Cowden Clarke had introduced him to a congenial literary circle, among whom Leigh Hunt, ever ready to welcome genius, and Haydon the painter, encouraged his natural leanings to authorship. Hunt writes : " We read and walked together, and

used to write verses of an evening on a given subject. No imaginative pleasure was left unnoticed by us or unenjoyed, from the recollection of the bards and patriots of old, to the luxury of a summer rain at our windows, or the clicking of the coal in the winter time."

But though we are accustomed—not unjustly—to marvel at the excellence of the work produced by so youthful a poet as Keats, it is quite incorrect to speak of his genius as in any sense precocious. His earliest efforts are "much more like exercises in the art of writing verse than poetry properly so called;" and even the first published volume (1817) is crude and mannered, though it contains the exquisite *I stood tiptoe upon a little hill*, the sonnet on Chapman's *Homer*, and that notable piece of poetical criticism, *Sleep and Poetry*. But *then* he suddenly found himself; and during five years of unexampled storm and stress, produced a compact body of extraordinarily mature work which has been aptly characterized as "more intensely and exclusively *poetical* than any other."

Keats had inherited a little money from his maternal grandmother, and was therefore in no way bound to follow an uncongenial profession; while the operating-knife held terrors for his imagination. His little volume was published by Charles and James Ollier, and he left London that he might devote himself to the composition of *Endymion*.

But from this time, and throughout the greater part of his short life, he was largely occupied by depressing family affairs. One brother, George, was a manly and energetic companion, though not prosperous, whose sympathy and encouragement were always helpful; but he married, and left England to help the family resources. Tom was always an invalid in need of nursing, while the orphan sisters were a cause of anxiety. The poet also overtaxed his strength in company with more robust friends, and

in occasional outbursts of his old passion for boxing, having once "thrashed a butcher as big again as himself for an act of cruelty." And neither trouble nor weariness could check his ardour in his chosen vocation.

*Endymion* was revised and published in 1818, and *Isabella, or the Pot of Basil*, written in the same year. Both poems show an almost phenomenal advance on former work, the former embodying, with somewhat exuberant wealth of decoration, his unique sympathy with classical myth.

About this time *Blackwood's* and the *Quarterly*, twin giants of literary criticism, chose to vent their spleen upon the so-called Cockney school of poets, eagerly heralded by Leigh Hunt; and "Johnny Keats" received his full share of vulgar, personal, and unmannerly abuse. For years it was supposed that the clumsy taunts of "the authorities" helped to hasten his death; but one is glad to know that the assumption has been proved, on the most reliable testimony of his best friends, to have been entirely false. As George Keats trenchantly put it: "John was the very soul of courage and manliness, and as much like the *Holy Ghost* as *Johnny Keats*." Besides, he was almost wholly absorbed in nursing his invalid brother, by whose bedside he wrote nearly the whole of *Hyperion*, the epic which he ultimately left a fragment, on account of its too close resemblance to Milton.

What really *did* assist to break up the already weakened constitution, in which an inherited tendency to consumption had taken root, was the absorbing passion he conceived during the spring of 1819 for Miss Fanny Brawne. *The Eve of St. Agnes*, with its matchless charm of colouring, and that priceless fragment, *The Eve of St. Mark*, were well in hand, as the ardent young poet alternately nursed and resisted his passion, not from any doubt of his lady's charms or his own constancy, but haunted by the overwhelming

sense of his own physical weakness and the fear of death. During the struggle he wrote the immortal odes on *Indolence*, on *A Grecian Urn*, *To Psyche*, and *To a Nightingale*, with *La Belle Dame sans Merci*; but when at last he told his love, and was accepted by Miss Brawne, the tension was nowise diminished. His letters to her betray an ingenuity in tormenting himself and his beloved with an agony of apprehension which has seldom, if ever, been equalled in pathos.

The strain apparently wore out his powers, for the satirical fairy tale, *Cap and Bells*, is not worthy of him, and the reconstruction of *Hyperion* as a directly narrated vision (a form curiously enough held to be the original draft until Mr. Colvin discovered the contrary) is admittedly a failure, despite the high conviction therein expressed on the true mission of poets.

The fatal disease soon definitely declared itself, and the devoted nursing of friends and of Fanny Brawne herself was of no avail. *Lamia*, *Isabella*, *The Eve of St. Agnes* and other Poems were issued in 1820; *La Belle Dame sans Merci* appeared in Hunt's *Indicator* during the same year, but their author

1821 was scarcely able to appreciate their reception.

A.D. He bade farewell to his mistress, sailed for Italy with the devoted Joseph Severn, and on February 23, 1821, "died with the most perfect ease—he seemed to go to sleep."

Keats has now for many years been assigned a position near that of Shakespeare—not for that combination of qualities which go to make greatness (in the sum total of which he is excelled by many even among his contemporaries), but for certain purely poetic gifts that have seldom if ever before been found in such unhampered perfection. It has been noticed that the "mythology and poetry of the moon (youth's goddess) were perhaps longer uppermost in his thought than in any other poet's," and that his heroines (and even his heroes) are somewhat given to swooning. But his work is never unmanly

or mawkish. We must accept the Oriental strain commingled with the Greek and Celtic, which combine to make its haunting beauty. "I think," he wrote, "I shall be among the English poets after my death," and the modest prophecy has been most amply fulfilled.

## LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI.

Ah ! what can ail thee, wretched wight,  
 Alone and palely loitering ?  
 The sedge is withered from the lake,  
 And no birds sing.

Ah ! what can ail thee, wretched wight,  
 So haggard and so woe-begone ?  
 The squirrel's granary is full,  
 And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow,  
 With anguish moist and fever-dew ;  
 And on thy cheek a fading rose  
 Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,  
 Full beautiful—a fairy's child ;  
 Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
 And her eyes were wild.

I set her on my pacing steed,  
 And nothing else saw all day long ;  
 For sideways would she lean and sing  
 A fairy's song.

I made a garland for her head,  
 And bracelets too, and fragrant zone ;  
 She looked at me as she did love,  
 And made sweet moan.

She found me roots of relish sweet,  
 And honey wild, and manna-dew ;  
 And sure in language strange she said,  
 "I love thee true."

She took me to her elfin grot,  
 And there she gazed and sighed deep,  
 And there I shut her wild sad eyes—  
 So kissed to sleep.

And there we slumbered on the moss,  
 And there I dreamed, ah ! woe betide,  
 The latest dream I ever dreamed,  
 On the cold hill-side.



I saw pale kings and princes too,  
 Pale warriors—death-pale were they all—  
 Who cried, “ La Belle Dame sans Merci  
 Hath thee in thrall ! ”

I saw their starved lips in the gloom,  
 With horrid warning gapèd wide ;  
 And I awoke, and found me here  
 On the cold hill-side.

And this is why I sojourn here,  
 Alone and palely loitering ;  
 Though the sedge is withered from the lake,  
 And no birds sing.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

Born 1792 A.D. . . . . Died 1822 A.D.

THOUGH born and nurtured among the most conservative and the most complacent surroundings of English society, Shelley's poetry and private character stand for all the unrest and revolt of his generation. Spiritually and artistically, he is a child of the Revolution, born out of time. The reaction which had already seized upon so many true friends of liberty before the horrors of the guillotine, left him untouched. He cared little or nothing for facts, seeking only to express, in terms of the loftiest imagination, the original unsullied purpose of the tornado which had so recently shaken the foundations of Europe.

Indeed, to one of his sensitive and aspiring nature, the old Sussex squire of pleasant Field Place could never have proved a sympathetic father, and the fortune at his disposal scarcely lightened the stern bondage of conventionalism. He was born on August 4, 1792, and doubtless the freedom of country life gave him a happy childhood. But his earliest associations with common humanity were unfortunate. Sent to a Brentford boarding-school at the age of ten,

his almost feminine beauty provoked derision, and served to encourage his natural shrinking from the rough and tumble of the playground. Obviously the love of sport is essential to popularity among school-boys, and his removal to Eton two years later did not improve matters.

Yet already the opposing judgments, between which the man's character was destined to hang in the balance, were eagerly passed on the solitary young dreamer. All admitted that he could be the most delightful of companions, a born story-teller, and royal champion in distress; but he *would* not behave like other people. His passion for the unearthly and the grotesque was terrifying to his best friends; and what would become of a lad who fired a stack of fagots "in order that he might have a little hell of his own!"

His unorthodoxy, indeed, developed early, for he had not long left school before we hear that anxious parents, alarmed at the freedom of his opinions, stepped forward to break off the engagement he was on the point of forming with his cousin, Harriet Grove. Whether or not this disappointment in love was the actual cause of his first essay at authorship cannot precisely be determined; but he certainly wrote, and, moreover, succeeded in publishing, two novels at this period *before* going up to the university. They are of little merit, and have been deservedly left to moulder in oblivion.

At Oxford, Shelley formed at least one lasting friendship—with his biographer, the sardonic Thomas Jefferson Hogg—and found much time for congenial study and reflection in the atmosphere of leisurely scholarship. But he chafed considerably against the prescribed course of reading, and soon offended authority by the outspoken sincerity of his atheistic doctrines and the fierce radicalism of his social projects. He and Hogg, indeed, were expelled for the publication of a foolish pamphlet, when the poet

consoled his not unrighteous indignation by the issue of *Queen Mab*, a poem abounding in passages of great beauty, but tainted with a somewhat reckless spirit of revolt and an irreverent intolerance for what the majority hold sacred.

He then hastily married a schoolfellow of his sister's, named Harriet Westbrook, who was herself no more than a girl at the time, and proved an entirely unsuitable mate. No doubt the ill-advised managing of her elder and more vulgar sister intensified the bitterness of feeling between the young couple; but Shelley's simple-minded solution of leaving the two girls to their own devices cannot be justified; and, though he was certainly ignorant of the sufferings and shame which led to Harriet's suicide, his ignorance itself betrays a curious lack of that moral sense of responsibility which is so essential in human life. His total failure to appreciate, or even to realize, the conventional standards on such a question was perfectly sincere; and he always regarded the judgment which denied him the custody of his children as an act of stupid cruelty, measuring it rather by the acute suffering entailed than by any public consideration.

He had meanwhile eloped with Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, daughter of the author of *Political Justice* and other advanced philosophical works, whom he married on Harriet's death, and with whom he experienced unbroken happiness.

After a six weeks' tour through France and Switzerland in 1815, he returned to wander among the  
1816 oaks of Windsor Park, drawing a poetical like-  
A.D. ness of his own restless soul in *Alastor, or The Spirit of Solitude*. In 1816 the Shelleys paid another visit to the Continent, in company with Lord Byron, but passed the summer at Marlow, almost living on the Thames, where he composed *The Revolt of Islam*.

Then Shelley and his wife left England for the last time in 1818, and settled in Italy, where rich

colouring and soft breezes gave new life to his genius. Most of his best work was produced during these few last happy years under a southern sky.

In *Julian and Maddalo* (1818) the depression of old conflicts is not dispelled, and we have reminiscences of his intimacy with Lord Byron during the earlier visit to Venice; but the same year produced the immortal *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*, the fullest and most direct expression of the leading motive of his life. The beauty of which he sings, for which he was ever seeking, is ideal, abstract, and spiritual. The pursuit is all-absorbing, but, of necessity, without avail. Yet to attempt, to struggle after, even to dream of, so pure a vision will elevate and inspire.

Shelley, then, had found himself at last, and the sequel is triumph. His masterpiece, *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), written among the ruins of Caracalla, was preceded by that most powerful, though revolting of tragedies, *The Cenci* (1819). The poet described his *Prometheus* as "a lyrical drama, with characters and mechanism of a kind yet unattempted;" and undoubtedly its beauties are chiefly lyrical, despite the epic character of the theme. We read and delight in the poem rather for the haunting splendour of its language and imagery, the delicate fancy of the vision, than for any ethical value in its central conception of humanity, which, indeed, is partially false.

On the other hand, *The Cenci* is remarkable for the intense vividness of its human interest, so rare in this poet's work. The passions exhibited are morbid and unrelieved beyond human experience; but they are absolutely dramatic and personal in a manner he never before or afterwards attempted.

During the next year he produced three of his finest lyrics—*The Cloud*, *The Sensitive Plant*, and *The Skylark*; *Epipsychidion*, the echo of "youth's vision thus made perfect" in the fair Emilia Viviani; and *The Witch of Atlas*, in which he seems almost to share the magic powers of his heroine, as

“Ofttime

Following the serpent lightning’s winding track,  
She ran upon the platforms of the wind,  
And laughed to hear the fireballs roar behind.”

His noble *Defence of Poetry* (an essay in prose) followed in 1821, when also the sad death of the young Keats inspired his *Adonais*—perhaps the most exquisite memorial of friendship ever penned. The drama of *Hellas* bore witness to his eager sympathy with the Greeks, for whom a brother poet was destined, not many years later, to give his stormy life; and the magnificent fragment, *The Triumph of Life*, proved the last effort of his too short career.

For, in the summer of 1822, Shelley became much engrossed with one Captain Trelawny in the 1822 building of a new-fashioned yacht. On July 4 A.D. he and his friend Williams sailed from Leghorn, taking no heed of clouds that presaged tempest, and perished in the waves. The bodies were washed ashore after many days, and burned in accordance with local custom. Shelley’s ashes were placed in the Protestant cemetery at Rome, though the heart was strangely preserved and carried to Boscombe Manor, in England.

The personality of Shelley exercised a great and fascinating influence over almost every one with whom he came in contact, despite the cold and superior disapproval of the conventional. It is not, indeed, quite easy to appraise his character by ordinary standards. His boundless generosity and quick sympathies seem scarcely consistent with certain facts which cannot be glossed over, and the somewhat reckless utterance of unpalatable doctrines naturally gave the impression of a lawless nature.

The fact is that Shelley’s ideals were a somewhat perplexing combination of the artistic and the practical. He worshipped Beauty, yet was no pagan; he believed absolutely in the Unseen, triumphing, as we see in *Adonais*, with glad confidence over the Shadow

of Death. He hated the injustice and the cruelty of law and order.

His emotions and impulses being always pure and lofty, he trusted them implicitly, and obeyed them without any sense of what we call conscience (imposing theory), or authority. Imagination was ever lifting him to the ideal, while sympathy drew him to the real; and with reality he was in conflict, in revolt.

He is the very skylark of poetry, soaring far above our heads in a rarefied atmosphere of spiritual beauty, and ever looking towards the dawn, when man should stand forth

“Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man  
Equal, unclassed, tribeless and nationless,  
Exempt from awe, worship, degree; the king  
Over himself, just, gentle, wise.”

#### TO A SKYLARK.

What thou art we know not;  
What is most like thee?  
From rainbow clouds there flow not  
Drops so bright to see,  
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden  
In the light of thought,  
Singing hymns unbidden,  
Till the world is wrought  
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a highborn maiden  
In a palace tower,  
Soothing her love-laden  
Soul in secret hour  
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glowworm golden  
In a dell of dew,  
Scattering unbeholden  
Its ærial hue  
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered  
In its own green leaves,  
By warm winds deflowered,  
Till the scent it gives  
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves:



Sound of vernal showers  
 On the twinkling grass,  
 Rain-awakened flowers,  
 All that ever was  
 Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass :

Teach us, sprite or bird,  
 What sweet thoughts are thine :  
 I have never heard  
 Praise of love or wine  
 That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,  
 Or triumphal chant,  
 Matched with thine would be all  
 But an empty vaunt,  
 A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

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## CHAPTER IX.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON.

Born 1788 A.D. . . . . Died 1824 A.D.

IN the year 1790 a dissipated captain in the Guards abandoned his wife and a little child of two years in the stony wilderness of London. The officer's name was John Byron ; his wife was Catherine Gordon of Gight, in Aberdeenshire. He went abroad to die ; she went north to Aberdeen with her little lame boy to live as well as she could on £135 a year.

There, in Scottish schools, the boy received his early education, until an announcement reached the small household in the city of granite that, by the death of his grand-uncle, "Geordie" was a 1798 lord, and owner of Newstead Abbey, in A.D. Nottinghamshire. At once his weak, capricious mother was seized with a desperate horror of her son's lameness, which had existed from his birth. In vain she tried quacks and doctors. The foot remained unchangeably distorted, and to the last a look at the deformity stabbed Byron like a dagger. Less than two years at a Dulwich boarding-

school, and some time at Harrow, prepared the young lord for entering Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1805. Already the youth of seventeen, thoroughly spoiled by his foolish mother, who flung things at him one moment and strained him to her breast the next, had been neglecting his regular studies, but eagerly devouring other books of every class and kind. Oriental history seems early to have fascinated his taste; and this first love gave its own colouring to his chief poetical works. Already, too, another love than that for books had been tinging his spirit with its hues. The lame but handsome boy was only fifteen when he met that Mary Anne Chaworth whose coldness towards him was the first strain of lasting bitterness that mingled with the current of his life. The beautiful *Dream*, which we find among his minor poems, tells the sad story of this boyish love and its results.

Byron's life at Cambridge lasted about two years, during which he made some firm friends among the students, but annoyed and estranged the college Dons by his irregularities. Among other freaks, he kept bull-dogs and a bear in his rooms, the latter of which he introduced to visitors as in training for a fellowship. His lameness did not prevent him from taking a full share in athletic sports. At school he had loved hockey and cricket better than the Latin verse. At college, and during his residence at Newstead, before he came of age, he was passionately fond of boating. A large Newfoundland dog was his invariable companion during the lonely cruisions he enjoyed.\*

During his leisure hours at school and college he had been writing occasional verses, which appeared at Newark in 1807 in a little volume entitled *Hours of Idleness*. Very boyish and very 1807 weak these verses were, but they hardly A.D. merited the elaborate scorn with which an Edinburgh reviewer noticed them within the year.

\* The epitaph on this dog, especially the last line, affords a strange glimpse of the poet's misanthropic pride.

Stung to the quick by this article, with the authorship of which Lord Brougham is charged, the "noble minor" retorted in a poem, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, which showed the world that the abused versicles were but the languid recreations of a man in whose hand, when roused to earnest work, the pen became a tremendous and destructive weapon.

Two years of foreign travel (1809-11) led the poet through scenes whose beauty and historic interest inspired the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. Though Byron was only one-and-twenty when he set out upon this tour of Spain and Turkey, the shadow of disappointed love had long been brooding upon his heart. In spite of his own repeated denials, we cannot help identifying the writer with this gloomy Childe Harold, who had exhausted in revelry and vice the power of enjoying life. Not that Byron at this early stage felt within his breast only the cold and lifeless embers of wild passions which had burned themselves to death; but the poor young fellow, smarting sorely under his early sorrow, and feeling that his talents were of no common kind, grew into that diseased state of mind which leads a man to believe that it is a fine thing to hate all the world and care for nothing—to be utterly *blasé*, and alone and uncared-for. So he pictures Childe Harold, and the same unpleasant trait is reproduced in nearly all his portraits of men. When the first two cantos of this noble poem were published in 1812, the author, who only five years earlier had been 1812 sneered at as a weakling, rose by unanimous A.D. consent to the head of the London literary world. In his own words, he awoke one morning to find himself famous. As the Ayrshire peasant had been caressed by the fashionables of Edinburgh, the aristocratic and handsome Byron was idolized in the drawing-rooms of London.

His life as a man of fashion and a literary lion lasted for about three years. During this time he

took his seat in the House of Lords, and made three speeches without producing any marked effect.

The material gathered during his travels being yet far from exhausted, he wrote those fine Turkish tales which kindled in the public mind of England an enthusiastic feeling towards modern Greece. *The Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos* appeared in 1813, *The Corsair* and *Lara* in the following year. The two former are written in that eight-syllabled line which suits so well the narration of stirring and romantic adventures. In the latter he adopted the rhyming pentameters of Dryden and Pope, but gave them a music and a colour all his own. In all four the inevitable and unwholesome Byronic hero—sallow, wasted, dark-haired, mysterious, ill-humoured—casts his chill upon us. Childe Harold has wound a crimson shawl round his high, pale brow, has donned the snowy capote, has stuck yataghan and silver-mounted pistols in his belt, and in full Greek dress glooms at us with his melancholy eyes.

Byron's marriage with Miss Milbanke took place in 1815. Almost from the beginning there were disagreements, and in a twelvemonth the union was dissolved. One daughter, Ada, to whom are addressed the touching lines which open the third canto of *Childe Harold*, reminded the unhappy parents of what their home might have been.

Having produced *The Siege of Corinth* and *Parisina* amid the miseries of his last months in London, where he was abused in the papers and hissed in the streets for his conduct to his wife, he left England in disgust in the spring of 1816, and never saw his native land again. Restless and miserable years they were that filled up the allotted span of Byron's life. He passed—a lonely wanderer, with many a poisoned arrow rankling in his heart—over the blood-stained ground of Waterloo, amid the snowy summits of the Alps echoing with frequent thunder, into the beautiful Italian land, to find in the faded palaces of Venice

and the mouldering columns of Rome fit emblems of his own ruined life. At Venice, at Ravenna, at Pisa, and at Rome he lived an irregular life, writing many poems, for which he received many thousand pounds, but descending, as he sank morally, into a fiftul and frequently morbid style, too often poisoned with cheap blasphemy and licence.

His greatest work, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*,\* was finished in 1817. The third canto was written at Geneva; the fourth and last chiefly at 1817 Venice. The Spenserian stanza takes a noble A.D. music in the skilful hand of Byron. The view of modern Rome, the starlight vision of the bleeding gladiator, and the address to the ocean, which no familiarity can ever rob of its sublime effect, are the finest passages of the closing poem.

Of course Byron tried his pen at dramatic writing. Almost every poet does. But the author of *Childe Harold* and *The Corsair* had not the power of *going out of himself*, which a successful dramatist must possess. That dark and morbidly romantic figure, of whom we have spoken before, haunts us through all the mysteries and tragedies which he produced in the later years of his shadowed life. *Cain* and *Manfred* are the most powerful of these works; but they afford, especially the former, a terrible view into the workings of a mind steeped in rebellious pride and misanthropy. *Marino Faliero*, *The Two Foscari*, *Sardanapalus*, *Werner*, *Heaven and Earth*, and *The Deformed Transformed* are the principal remaining dramas from Byron's pen.

His last great literary effort was the composition of what is in many ways his most wonderful work, *Don Juan*. Not since Dryden had English literature seen such keenness of satire, and there is over and above that a lyrical beauty which is wholly his own. It is marred, unhappily, by much gratuitous indecency.

\* *Childe* is an old English word, signifying a *knight*. Byron at first intended to give an antique cast to the diction of the poem.

It stands, a fragment of unfinished toil, a sad memento of lofty genius debased to unworthy use. Never were shining gold and black mire so industriously heaped together. It seems as if the unhappy bard, tired of hating his fellow-mortals, had turned with fierce mockery upon himself.

Byron's last enterprise flings a pathetic light upon his closing days. The Greece whose ancient glories and whose lovely shores had formed a chief theme of his earlier song had risen at length from her ignoble bondage. The War of Independence had begun. Sailing from Genoa in 1823, Byron landed in Cephalonia, and soon passed to Missolonghi. With money, with advice, with encouragement, and with bodily service, he began to work eagerly in the cause of his adopted land. Difficulties were thick around him ; for wild lawlessness was everywhere, and fierce quarrels occurred in the Greek army every day. In a few months he did much to overcome these troubles, and was looking forward with eagerness to leading an attack on Lepanto, when fever, rising from the marshes of Missolonghi, seized in its deadly gripe his enervated and toil-worn frame. He died on April 19, 1824 ; and three days later, his turbulent Suliotes gathered, pale and tearful, round his coffin, to hear the funeral service read. The body of the poet was carried to England, and interred in the family vault at Hucknall Torkard, near Newstead.

*The Prisoner of Chillon*, a sketch written at Geneva ; *The Lament of Tasso* ; *The Prophecy of Dante* ; *Beppo*, a light tale of Venetian life ; *Mazeppa* ; and the terrible *Vision of Judgment*, written in mockery of a like-titled poem by Southey, with whom he had a deadly feud, complete the list of Byron's more important works.

#### ADDRESS TO THE OCEAN.

(FROM "CHILDE HAROLD.")

Roll on, thou deep and dark-blue ocean—roll !  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;



Man marks the earth with ruin—his control  
 Stops with the shore ; upon the watery plain  
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan—  
 Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths—thy fields  
 Are not a spoil for him—thou dost arise  
 And shake him from thee ; the vile strength he wields  
 For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,  
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
 And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray  
 And howling to his gods, where haply lies  
 His petty hope in some near port or bay,  
 And dashest him again to earth :—there let him lay.

The armaments, which thunder-strike the walls  
 Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake  
 And monarchs tremble in their capitals ;  
 The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make  
 Their clay creator the vain title take  
 Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war :  
 These are thy toys, and as the snowy flake,  
 They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar  
 Alike the Armada's pride, and spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee.  
 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage—what are they ?  
 Thy waters wasted them while they were free,  
 And many a tyrant since ; their shores obey  
 The stranger, slave, or savage ; their decay  
 Has dried up realms to deserts ;—not so thou,  
 Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—  
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—  
 Such as Creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
 Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time,  
 Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm—  
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
 Dark-heaving, boundless, endless, and sublime—  
 The image of Eternity—the throne  
 Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime  
 The monsters of the deep are made ; each zone  
 Obeyes thee ; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone

And I have loved thee, Ocean ! and my joy  
 Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
 Borne, like thy bubbles, onward ; from a boy  
 I wantoned with thy breakers—they to me  
 Were a delight ; and if the freshening sea

Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear ;  
 For I was as it were a child of thee,  
 And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
 And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

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## CHAPTER X.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Born 1757 A.D. . . . . Died 1827 A.D.

BOTH as poet and painter William Blake stands absolutely outside the normal progress and development of history. He sang and drew at the direct bidding of his own imagination, following no models and founding no school. In some ways he may certainly be said to have anticipated the literary reforms inaugurated by Wordsworth; but he formulated no artistic theories, and his philosophy, so far as it is intelligible, brought him to very different conclusions.

Blake was born at No. 28 Broad Street, Carnaby Market, near Golden Square, London, in November 1757, the second child in a family of five. His father was a hosier, presumably in a small way of business, and the boy was taught little or nothing beyond the very rudiments of education. But at the age of ten he entered the drawing school of a Mr. Pars in the Strand, and in his twelfth year had already written some of the verses afterwards published in his *Poetical Sketches*.

His early days were given to copying cheap prints from the old masters, purchased in sale-rooms, and wandering through country lanes. In 1771 he 1771 was apprenticed to James Basire, an engraver of A.D. 31 Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, in whose studio he met Goldsmith and other notabilities of the day. After two years' instruction in the elements and technicalities of his art, the young engraver received a congenial commission which set him drawing the buildings and monuments of Westminster Abbey and

other old London churches. His leisure hours, we are told, were chiefly occupied in making verses and pictures for the adornment of his mother's room in Broad Street.

Having served his indentures, Blake in due course became a student at the Royal Academy, made the acquaintance of Flaxman, Stothard, and Fuseli, and in 1780 exhibited a picture, probably in water colours, on the death of the Earl of Godwin.

Two years later he married Catherine Sophia Boucher, the daughter of a market gardener in Battersea, and settled at 23 Green Street, Leicester Fields. Pretty Mrs. Blake "made her mark" on the marriage register, but she proved a most congenial—nay, an ideal—helpmate to the imaginative poet-artist. She quickly learned to read and write, and even became so accomplished an engraver, colourer, and designer that it is not always possible for us now to distinguish her work from that of her husband. She accepted his marvellous "visions" with a beautiful simplicity of faith that had nothing in it of weak-minded credulity, and in every way encouraged and inspired Blake's best work by her loving sympathy and patient, industrious co-operation.

In their early married days apparently the young couple were not entire strangers to literary and fashionable society, where Blake was encouraged to read aloud and to sing his own poems. A certain Rev. Henry Mathew, whose wife was of some note as a hostess at conversaziones, took the practical step of arranging for the publication, in 1783, of the now famous *Poetical Sketches*, Blake's first work—and, indeed, the only one ever issued through the ordinary channels. The unaffected spontaneity and simple music of this volume was so far in advance of its age as to attract scant notice.

Presumably the death of old Mr. Blake in 1784 was the cause of his son's determination to set up business on his own account. He moved next door

to his old home, and opened No. 27 Broad Street as a printseller's and engraver's under the title Parker and Blake—Parker being a fellow-apprentice, Mrs. Blake acting as saleswoman, and his brother Robert joining the household as a pupil. One does not imagine that the firm made any very large profits; at any rate, the partnership was dissolved in 1787, after the death of Robert, and the Blakes once more settled in a home of their own in Poland Street.

Here, evidently, they were confronted by actual poverty, while Blake had ready another slim volume of priceless poetry which must be given to the world. In this emergency he devised an entirely novel and economic method of book production, which he affirmed had been revealed to him by the spirit of his dead brother. He and Mrs. Blake were able to do the whole work with their own hands. They wrote the text and drew the designs in an impervious ink on copperplate, burned away the remaining surface, and printed the words and drawings left in relief by the ordinary method, colouring the proofs by hand. It was not possible, of course, to issue a large number of copies in this way; but each was sold at a fair price, and the result was amply sufficient for their modest desires after fame and wealth.

So appeared, in 1789, the immortal *Songs of Innocence*, and five years later (in his thirty-eighth year) the scarcely less perfect *Songs of Experience*, besides about ten so-called "prophetic books," which are now read little and understood less.

Curiously enough, we have very little original work written by Blake during the last twenty-five years of his life, when he devoted himself to the illustration of books not always entirely worthy of the honour. He made numerous designs and engravings for Young's *Night Thoughts*, Blair's *The Grave*, and *The Canterbury Pilgrims*, his latest and finest work, however, being his *Illustrations to the Book of Job*, issued in 1826.

After this, in spite of advancing years, he embarked on the study of Italian, in order to illustrate Dante's *Divina Commedia*, but did not live to finish the 1827 work. He died at No. 3 Fountain Court, Strand, A.D. on August 12, 1827, "singing of the things he saw in heaven."

Throughout his long life Blake, as his wife put it, was "always away in paradise." He believed implicitly in the visions by which he was continually haunted, drew pictures of the beings he saw around him, and always declared that the "prophetic books" were "written from immediate dictation, twelve or sometimes twenty or thirty, lines at a time, without premeditation, and even against his will." He calls his own *Jerusalem* "the grandest poem that this world contains," claiming a right to praise it, "since he dare not pretend to be other than the secretary—the authors are in eternity."

The "dictated" books, though enriched by passages of magnificent beauty, are extremely obscure and unequal. Undoubtedly our poet's fame must rest mainly on the small body of exquisitely simple and musical lyrics contained in the three volumes already particularized, which are distinguished above almost any other examples in our language by a childlike freshness of thought, a joyous sympathy with nature, and a direct purity of worship to God and His works.

#### THE LAMB.

Little lamb, who made thee ?  
 Dost thou know who made thee,  
 Gave thee life and bade thee feed ;  
 By the stream and o'er the mead ;  
 Gave thee clothing of delight,  
 Softest clothing, woolly, bright ;  
 Gave thee such a tender voice,  
 Making all the vales rejoice ?  
     Little lamb, who made thee ?  
     Dost thou know who made thee ?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee ;  
 Little lamb, I'll tell thee.

He is callèd by thy name,  
 For He calls Himself a Lamb ;  
 He is meek and He is mild,  
 He became a little child.  
 I a child and thou a lamb,  
 We are callèd by His name.  
     Little lamb, God bless thee !  
     Little lamb, God bless thee !

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## CHAPTER XI.

WILLIAM HAZLITT.

Born 1778 A.D. . . . . Died 1830 A.D.

It has been well said that "Hazlitt must have been one of the most uncomfortable of all English men of letters who can be called great, to know as a friend. He is certainly, to those who know him only as readers, one of the most fruitful in instruction and delight."

He was born in Mitre Lane, Maidstone, on April 10, 1778, but spent his childhood in Ireland and America, returning to England at the age of eight, when his father became a Unitarian minister at Wem, in Shropshire. The boy has been described as "of a dry and intractable understanding." His manners and disposition were not conciliatory, and he seems to have found his chief delight in the abstract reasoning of politics and philosophy. It was Coleridge whose "siren's song" first roused the shy youth to a sudden and deep conception of beauty, which probably determined him in the attempt to become a painter. To this end he studied, with eager industry, in London and Paris ; but, being dissatisfied with the result of his efforts, "began to stammer out his sentiments on paper."

On May 1, 1808, he married Sarah Stoddart, 1808 a clever woman, without tact or sympathy ; A.D. and on the birth of his son a few years later, first realized the necessity of doing something to earn a living.



His grandson describes him at this time as "a man whose politics were those of a minority, who never read a book through after he was thirty, and who, in original composition, could scarcely at the outset see his way two sentences before him." Yet journalism was the only profession he could enter without preparation or training, and he accordingly bent his energies to acquiring a position as a "free lance" in the literary world.

From this period his personal life presents few variations beyond the friendships—perpetually broken by pique and jealousy—of literary men, and certain domestic complications on which it is not profitable to dwell.

Hazlitt did not live long with his wife; he spoilt some of the best years of his life by that mysterious and unsatisfying passion for Sarah Walker of which the tempestuous course is revealed in his *Liber Amoris*; and after being divorced by the first Mrs.

1824 Hazlitt, he married in 1824 a widow of some  
A.D. property, who, however, left him very shortly afterwards.

His work, though it can never have been described as regular, was not seriously interrupted by the stress of his personal emotions. He wrote few books, but numberless essays; and, despite the prejudices that deface nearly every page, has been ranked by many as the greatest of English critics of literature. He is illuminating on *Shakespeare*, and the *Comic Writers*, while *The Spirit of the Age* presents a compact, comprehensive, and almost a final view of his most brilliant contemporaries. As a writer on art he stands almost alone, and certainly pre-eminent, between Sir Joshua Reynolds and Ruskin. Of his criticism generally, the most characteristic feature is the grasp evinced of an author's work as a whole, of his true inward relations to others, and of his most permanent qualities. Hazlitt felt the beauties of art most passionately, and forces a share of his enthusiasm on the reader. Though

perpetually unfair and almost childishly petulant in his indignation, he has the conspicuous merit of never truckling to fashion, and always shows the full courage of his convictions. He never tempts us to admire what is not admirable.

But Hazlitt was too moody and exacting—above all, too jealous—for the amenities of social life. He could never obtain the relief of constant friendship or sympathy, he joined no group of congenial spirits. His tempestuous and egotistical spirit preyed on its own vitals, and, at the age of fifty-two, “he lay—ghastly, shrunk, and helpless—on the bed from which he never afterwards rose.”

Yet his last words were, “Well, I’ve had a happy life!” If the struggle seemed worth while to him who suffered it, how much more may we, who enjoy only the fruits, rejoice that such a powerful intellect was given up to the utterance of clear thought, strong feeling, and critical insight.

#### COBBETT’S INCONSISTENCY.

(FROM “THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.”)

He pays off both scores of old friendship and new-acquired enmity in a breath, in one perpetual volley, one raking fire of “arrowy sleet” shot from his pen. However his own reputation or the cause may suffer in consequence, he cares not one pin about that, so that he disables all who oppose, or who pretend to help him. In fact, he cannot bear success of any kind, not even of his own views or party; and if any principle were likely to become popular, would turn round against it to show his power in shouldering it on one side. In short, wherever power is, there he is against it: he naturally butts at all obstacles, as unicorns are attracted to oak-trees, and feels his own strength only by resistance to the opinions and wishes of the rest of the world. To sail with the stream, to agree with the company, is not his humour. If he could bring about a Reform in Parliament, the odds are that he would instantly fall foul of and try to mar his own handiwork; and he quarrels with his own creatures as soon as he has written them into a little vogue—and a prison. I do not think this is vanity or fickleness so much as a pugnacious disposition, that must have an antagonist power to contend with, and only finds itself at ease in systematic opposition. If it were not for this, the high towers and rotten places of the world would fall before the battering-ram of his hard-headed reasoning; but if he once found them tottering, he would apply his strength to prop them up, and disappoint the expectations of his followers.

He cannot agree to anything established, nor to set up anything else in its stead. When it is established, he presses hard against it, because it presses upon him, at least in imagination. Let it crumble under his grasp, and the motive to resistance is gone. He then requires some other grievance to set his face against. His principle is repulsion, his nature contradiction: he is made up of mere antipathies, an Ismaelite indeed without a fellow. He is always playing at *hunt the slipper* in politics. He turns round on whoever is next him. The way to wean him from any opinion, and make him conceive an intolerable hatred against it, would be to place somebody near him who was perpetually dinning it in his ears. When he is in England, he does nothing but abuse the Boroughmongers, and laugh at the whole system: when he is in America, he grows impatient of freedom and a republic. If he had stayed there a little longer, he would have become a loyal and a loving subject of his Majesty King George IV. He lampooned the French Revolution when it was hailed as the dawn of liberty by millions: by the time it was brought into almost universal ill-odour by some means or other (partly no doubt by himself) he had turned, with one or two or three others, staunch Buonapartist. He is always of the militant, not of the triumphant party: so far he bears a gallant show of magnanimity; but his gallantry is hardly of the right stamp. It wants principle: for though he is not servile or mercenary, he is the victim of self-will. He must pull down and pull in pieces; it is not his disposition to do otherwise. It is a pity; for with his great talents he might do great things, if he would go right forward to any useful object, make thorough stitch-work of any question, or join hand and heart with any principle. He changes his opinions as he does his friends, and much on the same account. He has no comfort in fixed principles; as soon as anything is settled in his own mind, he quarrels with it. He has no satisfaction but in the chase after truth, runs a question down, worries and kills it, then quits it like vermin, and starts some new game, to lead him a new dance, and give him a fresh breathing through bog and brake, with the rabble yelping at his heels, and the leaders perpetually at fault.

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## CHAPTER XII.

GEORGE CRABBE.

Born 1754 A.D. . . . . Died 1832 A.D.

"NATURE'S sternest painter, yet the best," wrote Lord Byron of Crabbe. It was a just and generous compliment.

Well might George Crabbe be a painter of stern and gloomy scenes, for with these he had been familiar from earliest childhood. His first recollections were

of a flat and ugly coast, bordered with rock-pools, washed by gray waves, and tenanted only by a race of wild, amphibious, weather-beaten men, who, for the most part, added to their lawful calling as fishermen the yet more hazardous occupation of the smuggler. Such was the scenery, and such were the people round Aldeburgh, in Suffolk, where, in 1754, he was born. His father, the salt-master or 1754 collector of salt duties in that little town, A.D. treated his son George, as he seems to have treated everybody else, with considerable harshness. But the boy had early found a consolation for the passing griefs of childhood. He used to cut out for his private reading the occasional verses of a periodical for which his father subscribed. Over and over again the treasured scraps were conned, until the owner began to imitate their simple music.

The life of Crabbe, before settling down into the quietude of a rural parish, presents pleasant and painful scenes. The boy of fourteen, who had already got some grounding in classics and mathematics, was apprenticed to a surgeon at Wickham Brock, near Bury St. Edmund's. Here he met with such ill treatment that it was thought right to remove him to another master at Woodbridge, in his native shire. Secretly, amid all discouragements and sorrows, the young poet, even when he was rolling pills or grinding drugs in a mortar, had been cultivating his new-found talent for making verses. In the house of his hard taskmaster he had "filled a drawer with poetry." And while at Woodbridge he won a prize for a poem on *Hope*, which was offered by the proprietor of a certain magazine. The success of this maiden effort sealed the future fate of Crabbe. Thenceforward for life he was a poet; and in a short time, after a brave attempt to establish himself in his profession at Aldeburgh, he was drawn by an irresistible magnetism into the then perilous struggles of literary life in London.

This is the strangest period of his story. An apothecary's shopman and a country clergyman have nothing wonderful about their daily lives. But there is often a romance about the career of a literary adventurer, especially during his earlier struggles, which possesses a remarkable fascination. Even the first step Crabbe took towards getting to London was original and odd. He had no money. He sat down and wrote a letter, asking the loan of three pounds from Mr. Dudley North, whose brother had once contested the town of Aldeburgh at an election. The money came. A sloop bound for London was in the harbour, and soon the ex-surgeon stood in the solitude of those busy streets.

There he went through the old routine of hard work and bitter rejection, in the midst of which so many earnest, hopeful hearts have failed and broken. His poems were refused; a publisher, to whom he had entrusted the issuing of a work on his own account, failed; his money was nearly gone, and want stared him in the face. Just at this crisis he thought of his letter to North and the cordial reply. At once acting on the recollection, he wrote, enclosing poems to the Prime Minister, the Lord Chancellor, and others. No answer came. He would try the great Edmund Burke. With a beating heart he knocked at the statesman's door one night, handed in a letter, and then went in pitiable agitation to walk to and fro on Westminster Bridge, till the lamps went out along the river, and the dawn began to glimmer in the east. Burke's kindness was prompt and real. Appointing a time for Crabbe to call, he looked over the manuscripts, picked out two—*The Library* and *The Village*—good-naturedly pointed out some passages in need of change; and, better than all, took the works to Dodsley's shop, and recommended them to that eminent bookseller. Going further still, he brought the poet out to Beaconsfield, where he introduced him to some of the first men of the day. The tide had



SIR WALTER SCOTT AND HIS LITERARY FRIENDS, AT ABBOTSFORD

*From the picture by Thomas Faed, R.A.*





turned, and thenceforward there was no struggle in the peaceful life of Crabbe.

In 1781 *The Library* was published. Lord Chancellor Thurlow became his friend, though tardily. At Burke's suggestion the poet qualified himself for entering the Church, and was ordained in the August of 1782. The *quondam* surgeon went back to Aldeburgh as curate of the parish, with every prospect of competence and fame. His good friend Burke did not forget the struggler he had saved from want, or worse than want. The statesman's influence having obtained for him the domestic chaplaincy in the household of the Duke of Rutland, he exchanged Aldeburgh parsonage for Belvoir Castle. Then appeared, in 1783, *The Village*, the revival of which was 1783 among the last works of Dr. Johnson's life; A.D. and so decided was the success of the poem that its publication may be regarded as the seal of George Crabbe's fame. Presented by Thurlow with two small livings in Dorsetshire, the successful poet married without delay that Suffolk girl who had long waited for him.

The quiet current of his days flowed on without any striking change or remarkable sorrow, except the regrets of moving occasionally from one parish to another, and that one darkest cloud of his life, the loss of his affectionate wife. In 1785 he published *The Newspaper*; and then his name was not seen in the publishers' lists for two-and-twenty years. The flowers, insects, and rocks of his parish, wherever he might be, engaged much of his time. With his sons, whom he taught at home, he read French and Italian books, and took long walks through the fields. Such pursuits, combined with the unflagging labour of the pen, filled those hours of the country clergyman that were not given to the duties of his office.

His most successful work, *The Parish Register*, appeared in 1807; and three years later came *The Borough*, in which, perhaps, we find his most powerful

painting. About a year after the loss of his wife, which befell him in 1813, he was presented by the

Duke of Rutland to the living of Trowbridge, 1814 in Wiltshire, worth £800 a year. There he A.D. wrought at his last great literary task, *The Tales of the Hall*, which were published in 1819, and for which, with the remaining copyright of his poems, he received the large sum of £3,000. There, too, he died at a ripe old age, on February 3, 1832.

The English poor—their woes, weaknesses, and sins—form the almost unvarying theme of Crabbe's poetry. Himself a poor man's son, he could not help, whenever he visited the hovels or the parish workhouse at Muston or at Trowbridge, recollecting the days when he had played with ragged boys down by the shipping in the little harbour of Aldeburgh; or when he had stood by the sick-beds of labourers and boatmen, a poor country surgeon living a more wretched and precarious life than many of his patients. He had been himself within the veil of the poor man's life—he had himself felt many of the sorrows that smite the poor; and thus it was that he could produce, with such marvellous truth and minuteness of detail, those gray photographs of humble life which extorted Byron's praise. The distinguishing feature of his poetry is the wonderful minuteness of his descriptive passages. One of the most objective of our poets, he described faithfully all that he saw, and little seems to have escaped his searching ken. Upon the sea he dwells with especial love. It was almost the only beautiful object that met his young eyes at Aldeburgh; and whether he writes of it as the gentle, sunny thing that laps lazily at the side of a becalmed ship, or the fierce and powerful element that sweeps in white fury over sharp rocks, some of his finest lines flow and brighten in its praise. He has been called a "Pope in worsted stockings;" which simply means that he wrote in the pentameter couplet of which

Pope was so fond, and that he wrote about the poor. Otherwise, there is as slight similarity between the testy little invalid of Twickenham and the mild rector of Trowbridge as between the powdered and brocaded Belinda of the one, whose tress is severed by the daring scissors, and the rosy-cheeked Phœbe Dawson of the other, who trips smiling across the village green.

ISAAC ASHFORD.

(FROM "THE PARISH REGISTER.")

Next to these ladies, but in nought allied,  
A noble peasant, Isaac Ashford, died.  
Noble he was, contemning all things mean,  
His truth unquestioned and his soul serene.  
Of no man's presence Isaac felt afraid ;  
At no man's question Isaac looked dismayed :  
Shame knew him not, he dreaded no disgrace ;  
Truth, simple truth, was written in his face.  
Yet while the serious thought his soul approved,  
Cheerful he seemed, and gentleness he loved ;  
To bliss domestic he his heart resigned,  
And with the firmest, had the fondest mind.  
Were others joyful, he looked smiling on,  
And gave allowance where he needed none ;  
Good he refused with future ill to buy,  
Nor knew a joy that caused reflection's sigh.  
A friend to virtue, his unclouded breast  
No envy stung, no jealousy distressed—  
Bane of the poor ! it wounds their weaker mind  
To miss one favour which their neighbours find.  
Yet far was he from stoic pride removed ;  
He felt humanely, and he warmly loved :  
I marked his action when his infant died,  
And his old neighbour for offence was tried ;  
The still tears, stealing down that furrowed cheek,  
Spoke pity plainer than the tongue can speak.  
If pride was his, 'twas not their vulgar pride,  
Who, in their base contempt, the great deride ;  
Nor pride in learning, though my clerk agreed,  
If fate should call him, Ashford might succeed ;  
Nor pride in rustic skill, although we knew  
None his superior, and his equals few :  
But if that spirit in his soul had place,  
It was the jealous pride that shuns disgrace ;  
A pride in honest fame, by virtue gained,  
In sturdy boys to virtuous labours trained ;  
Pride in the power that guards his country's coast,  
And all that Englishmen enjoy and boast ;  
Pride in a life that slander's tongue defied,—  
In fact, a noble passion, misnamed pride.

## CHAPTER XIII.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Born 1771 A.D. . . . . Died 1832 A.D.

WHETHER we estimate him by the great area and sweep of his literary work, or by the splendour of the fame that he achieved, Scott must be reckoned beyond question the greatest writer that the nineteenth century produced, and one of the few very great writers of the world. Before he began to pour his wonderful series of novels from a well of fancy that seemed without measure and without depth, he had already won brilliant renown as a poet of chivalry and romance.

As the object of this chapter is to present a clear and vivid sketch of Scott's life, we shall best avoid confusion by dividing that life into four great periods, to be touched on in succession, reserving for the close a short account of the principal works with which he endowed his country and the world.

- I. From his birth in 1771 to his entrance on literary life in 1796 by the publication of Bürger's *Lenore*, translated from the German. This period, extending over twenty-five years, includes his early life, his education, his literary apprenticeship, and his first appearance as an advocate.
- II. From 1796 to the publication of *Waverley* in 1814. This period of eighteen years, from his twenty-fifth to his forty-third year, includes the publication of his chief poems, and his editions of Dryden and of Swift. It was a time of growing fame.
- III. From 1814 to the great catastrophe of 1826, when he sat down, a man of fifty-five, to write off a debt considerably above £100,000.

During these twelve years, the brightest of his life, he produced his finest novels, and built on the banks of Tweed his mansion of Abbotsford.

IV. From 1826 to his death, a period of six years, devoted to constant literary toil, rendered doubly painful towards the end by the consciousness of decaying powers, and the shocks of mortal disease. Literally, Scott wrote himself to death. The noble genius, straining every nerve under an overwhelming burden, broke his heart and fell, just when the goal of his honourable hopes began to rise clearly into view.

In a house at the head of the College Wynd in Edinburgh, Walter Scott was born on August 15, 1771. His father was a well-known Writer 1771 to the Signet; his mother, Anne Rutherford, A.D. was the daughter of an eminent Edinburgh physician. When a child of only eighteen months a severe teething fever deprived him of the power of his right leg. The earliest recollections of the boy were of a fairer kind than the College Wynd, or even George Square, to which the family soon removed, could afford. His delighted eyes, as he lay among his intimate friends the sheep, on the grass-cushioned crags of Sandy-Knowe, saw, below, the windings of the silver Tweed, and the gray ruins of Dryburgh nestling among dark trees; and in front the purple summits of "Eildon's triple height." And this scene, the first he was conscious of gazing upon, was to the last most fondly loved of all. With Tweed, above all other names, the memory of Scott is imperishably associated. And upon that warm September day when his spirit fled, "the gentle ripple of Tweed over its pebbles" was the last earthly sound that fell upon his dying ear.

At the High School of Edinburgh he spent some



years, having entered Luke Fraser's second class in 1779, and passed to the tuition of the rector, Dr. Adam, in 1782. He did nothing remarkable in the classrooms; but in the yards of the High School he was very popular, on account of his powers as a story-teller. We should not forget, however, that he won Dr. Adam's attention by some clever poetical versions from Horace and Virgil. Indiscriminate reading was the grand passion of his boyhood. He tells us how he found some odd volumes of Shakespeare in his mother's dressing-room, where he sometimes slept, and with what absorbing delight he sat in his shirt reading them by the light of the fire, until he heard the noise of the family rising from the supper-table. Spenser, too, was an especial favourite with him, read many a time, during holiday hours, in some sheltered nook of Salisbury Crag or the Blackford Hill.

After a short attendance at the Latin, Greek, and Logic classes of the Edinburgh University, he was apprenticed to his father in 1786. Of Greek he knew next to nothing. He was well read in Shakespeare and Milton; but took especial delight in such writers as Spenser, Boccaccio, and Froissart. Nothing, he says, but his strong taste for historical study, a study that never grew weak, saved his mind at this time from utter dissipation. A dangerous illness, arising from the bursting of a blood-vessel, which occurred about the second year of his apprenticeship, gave him several months of almost uninterrupted reading, and deepened the colouring caught from old chivalrous romance.

When his apprenticeship was duly served, he studied for the Bar, and in July 1792 donned the wig and gown of a Scottish advocate. But this honourable garb was to him little more than a matter of form; for the practice of law, which never yielded him £200 a year, was soon given up for more congenial and illustrious toils.

The literary career of Scott opens with the publication of his *Translations from Bürger*. The study of German having become fashionable in Edinburgh some years earlier, Scott, with other young lawyers, loungers of the "Mountain," as their idling bench in the Parliament House was called, formed a class for the study of that language. Having heard of *Lenore*, the young student procured a copy, and one night after supper sat down to translate the thrilling tale. It was published, with *The Wild Hunts-* 1796  
*man*, a rendering from the same author, in the A.D. autumn of 1796.

A cottage at Lasswade soon received Scott and his young French bride, whose maiden name was Charlotte Carpenter, or Charpentier; and there the lawyer-poet lived happily by the Esk, occasionally varying his literary labours by the stirring details of military drill on Portobello sands; for he now wore scarlet, as quartermaster of the Edinburgh Light Horse. We can well understand how the galloping and wheeling of these cavalry drills, with trumpets, flashing steel, and the wild excitement of the charge, must have kindled martial fire in the breast of the author of *Marmion*.

In 1799, Scott was appointed, by the influence of the Duke of Buccleuch, Sheriff of Selkirkshire, poetically called Ettrick Forest. With the income of this office—£300 a year—and some little 1804  
fortune held by his wife, he soon established A.D. himself at the farm of Ashestiel, on the Tweed, not far from the Yarrow, a literary man now by profession. This house, where he resided for the greater part of nearly eight years, stood in an old-fashioned garden fenced with holly hedges, and on a high bank, which was divided from the river he loved so well only by a narrow strip of green meadow. Already he had made his name in literary circles by the publication of several fine ballads and three volumes of *The Border Minstrelsy*, filled partly with

original poems, but chiefly with pieces gathered during those tours in southern Scotland which he called his "raids into Liddesdale."

His life at Ashestiel may serve as a specimen of his routine to the last, when he was in the country. Rising at five, he lit his own fire (if it was cold weather), dressed with care, and went out to see his favourite horse. At six he was seated at his desk in his shooting-jacket, or other out-of-doors garb, with a dog or two couched at his feet. There he wrote till breakfast-time, at nine or ten; and by that hour he had, in his own words, "*broken the neck of the day's work.*" A couple of hours after breakfast were also given to the pen, and at twelve he was "his own man"—free for the day. By one he was on horseback, with his greyhounds led by his side, ready for some hours' coursing; or he was gliding in a boat over some deep pool on Tweed, salmon-spear in hand, watching in the sunlight for a silver-scaled twenty-pounder.\* Such sports, varied with breezy rides by green glen and purple moorland, closed the day, whose early hours had been given to the battle of Flodden, or the romantic wanderings of Fitzjames.

It was at Ashestiel that his first great poem—*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*—was completed.

1805 Published in January 1805, this noble picture  
A.D. of the wild Border life of bygone days raised  
the Sheriff of Ettrick Forest to an exalted

rank among British poets. The gray-haired Harper, who timidly turned his weary feet towards the iron gate of Newark, and tuned his harp to such glorious strains, is one of the finest creations of our poetical literature. This tale was but the first of a series of picturesque romances, couched in flowing verse of eight syllables, and coloured with the brightest hues of the old knightly life, that proceeded during the next ten years from Scott's pen. Of these enchanting poems we shall here name only *Marmion* and *The*

\* In that day even sheriffs plied the *leister*.

*Lady of the Lake*. Another important work of this period was his *Life and Works of Dryden*, which, published in eighteen volumes in 1808, cost him much toil during the three years he spent upon it.

The dream of being a Tweedside laird began, with his brightening fame and growing wealth, to take a definite shape. In 1806 he had been appointed one of the Clerks of Session, in room of old Mr. Home—promotion which did not at once increase his income, but gave him the prospect of £800 a year, in addition to his salary as sheriff, upon the death of his predecessor. Accordingly, he purchased the farm of Clarty-Hole, consisting of about a hundred acres, stretching for half a mile along the Tweed, not far from the foot of the Gala. This ill- 1811  
named and not very well-favoured spot formed A.D.  
the nucleus of Abbotsford. One piece of  
neighbouring land after another was added—a man-  
sion was built, which has been called “a Gothic  
romance embodied in stone and lime”—the bare  
banks of Tweed were clothed with plantations of  
young wood, and the fair dream of the poet’s life was  
fast shaping itself into a grand and apparently solid  
reality.

The year after his removal to Abbotsford, which took place in 1812, a letter from the Lord Chamberlain offered him the laureateship, in the name of the Prince Regent. This honour Scott declined with respectful thanks. He was meanwhile toiling hard at his *Life and Works of Dean Swift*.

But a power greater than even himself was conscious of had lain all this time sleeping in his brain. Fragments of a historical tale in prose, which was designed to give a picture of old Scottish life and manners, had been lying for years in his cabinet, when one day, as he was searching for some fishing-tackle, he came upon the almost forgotten sheets. It was then the autumn of 1813. Though engaged in finishing his edition of Swift, he set to work upon

the tale. The greater part of the first volume was done during the ensuing Christmas vacation, and "the evenings of three summer weeks" completed the remaining two. A gay party of young men were sitting over their wine in a house in George Street upon one of those summer evenings, when the host drew attention to a window where a solitary hand appeared, working without stay or weariness at a desk, and tossing down page after page of manuscript upon a rising heap. "It is the same every night," said young Menzies; "I can't stand the sight of it when I am not at my books. Still it goes on unwearied; and so it will be till candles are brought in, and nobody knows how long after that." It was Walter Scott's hand writing the last volumes of *Waverley*, seen as he sat in a back room of that house in North Castle Street—No. 39—which was long his Edinburgh residence.

When the work was finished, the manuscript was copied by John Ballantyne, in whose publishing concern Scott had, many years earlier, become a partner; and then *Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since*, was given to the world, but A.D. without the author's name. A cruise on board the Lighthouse yacht to Shetland and Orkney and round among the Hebrides, which filled two summer months of the same year, supplied him with materials for his fine poem, *The Lord of the Isles*, published in the following January.

The success of *Waverley* was immediate and remarkable, although it appeared in what publishers call the *dead season*. "Who wrote the nameless book?" became the great literary question of the day; and when, from the same hidden hand, there came a series of new novels, brilliant and enchaining as no novels had ever been before, the marvel grew greater still. Most carefully was the secret kept. One of the Ballantynes always copied the manuscript before it was sent to press. For a time Scott was not suspected,

owing to the mass of other literary work he got through ; but in Edinburgh at least, long before his own confession at the Theatrical Fund Dinner in 1827 rent a then transparent veil, the authorship of the Waverley novels was no mystery.

Elated by this success, and feeling like a man who had come suddenly upon a rich and unwrought mine of gold, Scott began to build and to plant at Abbotsford, and to buy land with all the zeal of a most hopeful nature. His industry never relaxed, nor did his public duties ever suffer from the severe desk-toil that he went through every day. While *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *Rob Roy*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, *Ivanhoe*, *Kenilworth*, and many other works were in progress, he sat daily during the winter and spring in the Court of Session, attended to his duties as sheriff, gave dinners in Castle Street, or went to "refresh the machine" and entertain his friends at Abbotsford. Never had a hard-working *littérateur* so many hours to give to his friends. When the morning's task was over in the little back parlour in Castle Street—a neat and orderly room, with its blue morocco books in dustless regularity, and its well-used silver ink-stand—he took his drive, or frolicked with his dogs, until it was time to show his cheerful face in the drawing-room of some friend. And at Abbotsford there was no difference in the desk-work ; but when that was done, he went with the ardour of a boy into the sports and pleasures of rural life, or walked out among his young trees with his unfailing retinue of dogs frisking about his feet. And none was happier than that hard-featured and faithful old forester, Tom Purdie, whom Scott's kindness had changed from a poacher into a devoted servant, when he saw the green shooting-coat, white hat, and drab trousers of the jovial sheriff appearing in the distance on the path that led to the plantations. The decoration of the interior of his mansion by the Tweed, and the collection of old armour, foreign weapons, Indian creases and idols, Highland



targets, and a thousand such things, dear to his chivalrous and antiquarian tastes, occupied many of his busiest and happiest hours. Upon his armoury and his woodlands, his house and grounds, his furniture and painting, he spent thousands of pounds; and to meet the expenses of such costly doings, and of the free hospitality to which his generous nature prompted him—doing the honours for all Scotland, as he said—he coined his rich and fertile brain into vast sums. Unhappily much of this money was spent before it was earned; and the ruinous system of receiving bills from his publishers as payment for undone work, when once entered upon, grew into a wild and destructive habit. Author and publishers, alike intoxicated by success, became too giddy to look far into the future. Yet that retributive future was coming with swift pace. As they neared the cataract, the smooth, deceitful current bore them yet more swiftly on. At last the money panic of 1826 came with its perils and its crashes. The London firm of Hurst and Robinson went down. Then followed Constable and Ballantyne. Scott's splendid fortune, all built of paper now utterly worthless, crumpled up like a torn balloon, and the author of the 1826 Waverley novels stood, at fifty-five years of A.D. age, not penniless alone, but burdened, as a partner in the Ballantyne concern, with a debt of £117,000. Nobly refusing to permit his creditors—or rather the creditors of the firm to which he belonged—to suffer any loss that he could help, he devoted his life and his pen to the herculean task of removing his mountain of debt. Thus opens the last, the shortest, and the saddest of the four periods into which we have marked out this great life.

Already his strong frame had been heavily shaken by severe illness. Especially in 1819—the year after he accepted the offer of a baronetcy—jaundice had turned the slightly gray hair that fringed his high forehead to snowy white. The first symptoms of

apoplexy had appeared in 1823. Yet the valiant soul was never shaken by the failing of the once sturdy frame. Amid the gloom of his commercial distresses—under the deeper sorrow of his wife's death, which befell him in the same sad year—he worked steadily and bravely on. Every day saw its heavy task performed; and he seldom laid aside his pen until he had filled *six* large pages with close writing, which he calculated as equal to *thirty* pages of print.

Some months before the crash he had entered upon a new and much more laborious kind of work. He had undertaken to write a *Life of Napoleon Buona-parte*. Formerly, with head erect and left hand at liberty for patting his stag-hound Maida, or other canine occupant of his "den," he had been used to write sheet after sheet of a novel with the same facile industry as on that summer evening when the young advocates in George Street saw the vision of a hand. But now he had to gather books, pamphlets, newspapers, letters, and all other kinds of historical materials round his writing-table, and painfully and slowly, notebook in hand, to wade through heavy masses of detail in search of dates and facts. Before he had read for pleasure; the old man had now to read, often with aching head and dim eyes, for the materials of his task. Heavy work for any one; heavier for him who had been used to pour forth the riches of his own mind without trouble and without research. Both morning and evening must now for the most part be given to literary toil.

*Woodstock* was the first novel he wrote after his great misfortune; and its sale for £8,228—it was the work of only three months—gave strength to the hopes of the brave old man that a few years would clear him from his gigantic debt. But the toil was killing him. The nine volumes of his *Life of Napoleon* were published in 1827. Essays, reviews, histories, letters, and tales, among the last that series called *The Chronicles of the Canongate*, poured from the un-

resting pen as fast as they had ever done in its strongest days. His delightful *Tales of a Grandfather*, in which for the first time a picturesque colouring was given to history intended for the perusal of the young, were among the works of his declining years. *Count Robert of Paris* and *Castle Dangerous* were the last of his published novels. What he called the *opus magnum*, a reprint of his novels with explanatory introductions and notes historical and antiquarian, may also be named as one of the chief tasks in the closing life of the novelist.

At last, in the midst of his toil, there came a day—February 15, 1830—when he fell speechless in his drawing-room under a stroke of paralysis. From that time he never was the same man, and “a cloudiness” in his words and arrangement shows that the shock had told upon the mind. Fits of apoplexy and paralysis occurred at intervals during that and the following year; and as a last hope, the worn-out workman sailed in the autumn of 1831 for 1831 Malta and Italy. He lived at Naples and at A.D. Rome for about six months; and in the former city he spent many of his morning hours in the composition of two novels, *The Siege of Malta* and *Bizarro*, which were never finished, and which last feeble efforts of a mind shattered by disease his friends wisely did not judge it right to publish. On his way home down the Rhine the relentless malady struck him a mortal blow. His earnest wish was to die at Abbotsford, the loved place that had cost him so dear; and there at last he found himself with his grandchildren and his dogs playing round the chair he could not leave.

Perhaps the saddest scene of all this sad time—sadder even than the kneeling family round the dying bed—was the last effort of the author to return to his old occupation. On the 17th of July, awaking from sleep, he desired his writing materials to be prepared. When the chair in which he lay propped up with

pillows was moved into his study and placed before the desk, his daughter put a pen into his hand ; but, alas ! there was no power in the fingers to close on the familiar thing. It dropped upon the paper, and the helpless old man sank back to weep in silence.

Little more than two months later, on September 21, 1832, he died, as he had wished to die, at Abbotsford, with all his children round his bed ; and on the fifth day after death his body was laid beside the dust of his wife in Dryburgh Abbey, whose gray walls he had seen among the yews from his grassy seat on the crags of Sandy-Knowe.

Some of Scott's chief works have been named in sketching his life. We subjoin here, for more accurate reference, a chronological list of the most important. Any one who has glanced over the catalogue of his writings appended to his *Life* by Lockhart, will know how useless it would be to give a complete list in a book like this :—

The Lay of the Last Minstrel,*	1805
Marmion,*	1808
Life and Works of Dryden,	"
The Lady of the Lake,*	1810
Vision of Don Roderick,*	1811
Rokeby,*	1812
Life and Works of Swift,	1814
Waverley,	"
The Lord of the Isles,*	1815
Guy Mannering,	"
The Antiquary,	"
The Black Dwarf and Old Mortality,	1816
Rob Roy,	1818
The Heart of Midlothian,	1818
Bride of Lammermoor,	1819
Legend of Montrose,	"
Ivanhoe,	1820
The Monastery,	"
The Abbot,	"
Lives of the Novelists,	"
Kenilworth,	1821
Fortunes of Nigel,	1822
Peveril of the Peak,	"
Quentin Durward,	1823
Redgauntlet,	1824

\* These are poems.

The Talisman,	. . . . .	1825
Letters of Malachi Malagrowther,	. . . . .	1826
Woodstock,	. . . . .	"
Life of Napoleon,	. . . . .	1827
Tales of a Grandfather—First Series,	. . . . .	1828
The Fair Maid of Perth,	. . . . .	"
Tales of a Grandfather—Second Series,	. . . . .	1829
Tales of a Grandfather—Third Series,	. . . . .	1830
Count Robert and Castle Dangerous,	. . . . .	1832

Though *facile princeps* in his own peculiar realm of poetry, Scott's brilliant renown rests chiefly on his novels. The same love of chivalrous adventure and mediæval romance colours his best works in both branches of literature. The author of *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake* was just the man to produce. In maturer age and with finer literary skill, the changeful, pathetic brilliance of *Waverley* and the courtly splendour of *Kenilworth*. Of his poems, *The Lady of the Lake* is perhaps the best. Nothing could surpass, for vivid force, the meeting and the duel between the disguised king and the rebel chieftain, Roderick Dhu, or that rapid flight of the Fiery Cross over mountain and moor, by which the clansmen are summoned to the tryst. The opening of Michael Scott's grave, in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and the battle of Flodden, at the close of *Marmion*, are pictures that none but true genius could paint. The fine songs scattered through the works of Scott afford further evidence of his great powers. Who does not know and delight in *Young Lochinvar* and *Bonnie Dundee*? Like Shakespeare, he had the gift of easily and almost carelessly writing unforgettable snatches of song.

Scott was eminently a painter in words. Witness the magnificent descriptions of natural scenery—sunsets, stormy sea, deep woodland glades—with which many of his chapters open. But his human portraitures surpass his landscapes. For variety and truth in the painting of character he was undoubtedly the Shakespeare of our English prose. What a crowd of names, "familiar as household words," come rushing on the mind, as we think of the gallery of portraits his magical

pencil has left for our endless delight and study! There is scarcely a class of old Scottish life without its type in this collection. Dominie Sampson, Nicol Jarvie, Jeanie Deans, Edie Ochiltree, Jonathan Oldbuck, Meg Dods, Dandie Dinmont, Dugald Dalgetty—their descendants may still be found by the banks of Forth and Clyde and Tweed.

Of the twenty-nine tales which form the Waverley novels, the greater part have a historical groundwork. Scottish history and Scottish soil were invested by the genius of Scott with a new lustre. Tourists came from all parts of the world to see the places where Fitz-James, Rob Roy, and Jeanie Deans had played their fancied parts. Nor was the Wizard himself forgotten amid the romance of the magical scenes his genius had conjured up. Abbotsford is still one of the sights of Scotland. But Scott was not the man to work a vein until it began to yield a base, inferior ore. When he felt that he had fallen below the level of his earlier poetical works, he turned to prose; and when *Waverley*, *The Antiquary*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, and so forth, had gone deep into the pictured life of Scottish history and society, he felt that it was time to break new ground. So, turning to English annals, he reproduced in *Ivanhoe* the brilliant, chivalrous days of the Lion-hearted king. And then followed several novels founded upon the most striking eras of English history. Of these, *Kenilworth*, a picture of Elizabeth and her court; *The Fortunes of Nigel*, dealing with London life in the reign of James the First; *Peveril of the Peak*, a story of the Restoration era; and *Woodstock*, a tale of Cromwell's time, may be named as the chief specimens. *The Talisman* carries us to the East during the third Crusade, and *Quentin Durward* introduces us to the French court during the reign of that strange mixture of cruelty, cunning, and superstition, King Louis the Eleventh. So the theme was varied, and thus the interest was maintained. Well might



Byron say of this wonderful master of fiction, "He is a library in himself."

The chief work of actual history by Scott is his *Life of Napoleon*. It is not a satisfactory performance. Written too near the time of which it treats to be quite impartial, it also bears in many places the marks of haste and imperfect execution. The training through which Scott had been going for the previous ten years was not of a kind to fit him for working with perfect patience upon a theme so vast and difficult. The laborious research and the careful balancing of conflicting evidence which such a work required were not the things to which Scott had been accustomed in his literary toils. The complete change of literary habits involved in this work has been noticed during the progress of our sketch.

### JEANIE DEANS AND THE QUEEN.

(FROM "THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN.")

"If your Majesty," he said, "would condescend to hear my poor countrywoman herself, perhaps she may find an advocate in your own heart, more able than I am, to combat the doubts suggested by your understanding."

The Queen seemed to acquiesce, and the Duke made a signal for Jeanie to advance from the spot where she had hitherto remained watching countenances, which were too long accustomed to suppress all apparent signs of emotion, to convey to her any interesting intelligence. Her Majesty could not help smiling at the awe-struck manner in which the quiet demure figure of the little Scotchwoman advanced towards her, and yet more at the first sound of her broad northern accent. But Jeanie had a voice low and sweetly toned, an admirable thing in woman, and eke besought "her Ledyship to have pity on a poor misguided young creature," in tones so affecting, that, like the notes of some of her native songs, provincial vulgarity was lost in pathos.

"Stand up, young woman," said the Queen, but in a kind tone, "and tell me what sort of a barbarous people your countryfolk are, where child-murder is become so common as to require the restraint of laws like yours?"

"If your Ledyship pleases," answered Jeanie, "there are many places beside Scotland where mothers are unkind to their ain flesh and blood."

It must be observed, that the disputes between George the Second, and Frederick, Prince of Wales, were then at the highest, and that the good-natured part of the public laid the blame on the Queen. She coloured highly, and darted a glance of a most penetrating

character first at Jeanie, and then at the Duke. Both sustained it unmoved: Jeanie from total unconsciousness of the offence she had given, and the Duke from his habitual composure. But in his heart he thought, My unlucky *protégée* has, with this luckless answer, shot dead, by a kind of chance-medley, her only hope of success.

Lady Suffolk, good-humouredly and skilfully, interposed in this awkward crisis. "You should tell this lady," she said to Jeanie, "the particular causes which render this crime common in your country."

"Some thinks it's the Kirk-Session—that is—it's the—it's the cutty-stool, if your Ledyship pleases," said Jeanie, looking down, and curtseying.

"The what?" said Lady Suffolk, to whom the phrase was new, and who besides was rather deaf.

"That's the stool of repentance, madam, if it please your Ledyship," answered Jeanie, "for light life and conversation, and for breaking the seventh command." Here she raised her eyes to the Duke, saw his hand at his chin, and, totally unconscious of what she had said out of joint, gave double effect to the innuendo, by stopping short and looking embarrassed.

As for Lady Suffolk, she retired like a covering party, which, having interposed betwixt their retreating friends and the enemy, have suddenly drawn on themselves a fire unexpectedly severe.

The deuce take the lass, thought the Duke of Argyle to himself; there goes another shot—and she has hit with both barrels right and left!

Indeed the Duke had himself his share of the confusion, for, having acted as master of ceremonies to this innocent offender, he felt much in the circumstances of a country squire, who, having introduced his spaniel into a well-appointed drawing-room, is doomed to witness the disorder and damage which arises to china and to dress-gowns, in consequence of its untimely frolics. Jeanie's last chance-hit, however, obliterated the ill impression which had arisen from the first; for her Majesty had not so lost the feelings of a wife in those of a Queen, but that she could enjoy a jest at the expense of "her good Suffolk." She turned towards the Duke of Argyle with a smile, which marked that she enjoyed the triumph, and observed, "The Scotch are a rigidly moral people." Then again applying herself to Jeanie, she asked, how she travelled up from Scotland.

"Upon my foot mostly, madam," was the reply.

"What, all that immense way upon foot? How far can you walk in a day?"

"Five and twenty miles and a bittock."

"And a what?" said the Queen, looking towards the Duke of Argyle.

"And about five miles more," replied the Duke.

"I thought I was a good walker," said the Queen, "but this shames me sadly."

"May your Ledyship never hae sae weary a heart, that ye canna be sensible of the weariness of the limbs!" said Jeanie.

That came better off, thought the Duke; it's the first thing she has said to the purpose.

"And I didna just a'thegether walk the haill way neither, for I

had whiles the cast of a cart ; and I had the cast of a horse from Ferrybridge—and divers other easements,” said Jeanie, cutting short her story, for she observed the Duke made the sign he had fixed upon.

“With all these accommodations,” answered the Queen, “you must have had a very fatiguing journey, and, I fear, to little purpose ; since, if the King were to pardon your sister, in all probability it would do her little good, for I suppose your people of Edinburgh would hang her out of spite.”

She will sink herself now outright, thought the Duke.

But he was wrong. The shoals on which Jeanie had touched in this delicate conversation lay under ground, and were unknown to her ; this rock was above water, and she avoided it.

“She was confident,” she said, “that baith town and country wad rejoice to see his Majesty taking compassion on a poor unfriended creature.”

“His Majesty has not found it so in a late instance,” said the Queen ; “but, I suppose, my Lord Duke would advise him to be guided by the votes of the rabble themselves, who should be hanged and who spared ?”

“No, madam,” said the Duke, “but I would advise his Majesty to be guided by his own feelings, and those of his royal consort ; and then, I am sure, punishment will only attach itself to guilt, and even then with cautious reluctance.”

“Well, my Lord,” said her Majesty, “all these fine speeches do not convince me of the propriety of so soon showing any mark of favour to your—I suppose I must not say rebellious ?—but, at least, your very disaffected and intractable metropolis. Why, the whole nation is in a league to screen the savage and abominable murderers of that unhappy man ; otherwise, how is it possible but that, of so many perpetrators who are engaged in so public an action for such a length of time, one at least must have been recognised ? Even this wench, for aught I can tell, may be a depository of the secret.—Hark you, young woman, had you any friends engaged in the Porteous mob ?”

“No, madam,” answered Jeanie, happy that the question was so framed that she could, with a good conscience, answer it in the negative.

“But I suppose,” continued the Queen, “if you were possessed of such a secret, you would hold it matter of conscience to keep it to yourself ?”

“I would pray to be directed and guided what was the line of duty, madam,” answered Jeanie.

“Yes, and take that which suited your own inclinations,” replied her Majesty.

“If it like you, madam,” said Jeanie, “I would hae gaen to the end of the earth to save the life of John Porteous, or any other unhappy man in his condition ; but I might lawfully doubt how far I am called upon to be the avenger of his blood, though it may become the civil magistrate to do so. He is dead and gane to his place, and they that have slain him must answer for their ain act. But my sister—my puir sister Effie, still lives, though her days and hours are numbered !—She still lives, and a word of the King’s mouth might restore her to a broken-hearted auld man, that never,

in his daily and nightly exercise, forgot to pray that his Majesty might be blessed with a long and a prosperous reign, and that his throne, and the throne of his posterity, might be established in righteousness. Oh, madam, if ever ye kend what it was to sorrow for and with a sinning and a suffering creature, whose mind is sae tossed that she can be neither ca'd fit to live or die, have some compassion on our misery!—Save an honest house from dishonour, and an unhappy girl, not eighteen years of age, from an early and dreadful death! Alas! it is not when we sleep soft and wake merrily ourselves, that we think on other people's sufferings. Our hearts are waxed light within us then, and we are for righting our ain wrangs and fighting our ain battles. But when the hour of trouble comes to the mind or to the body—and seldom may it visit your Leddyship—and when the hour of death comes, that comes to high and low—lang and late may it be yours—oh, my Leddy, then it isna what we hae dune for ourself, but what we hae dune for others, that we think on maist pleasantly. And the thoughts that ye hae intervined to spare the puir thing's life will be sweeter in that hour, come when it may, than if a word of your mouth could hang the haill Porteous mob at the tail of ae tow."

Tear followed tear down Jeanie's cheeks, as, her features glowing and quivering with emotion, she pleaded her sister's cause with a pathos which was at once simple and solemn.

"This is eloquence," said her Majesty to the Duke of Argyle. "Young woman," she continued, addressing herself to Jeanie, "I cannot grant a pardon to your sister—but you shall not want my warm intercession with his Majesty. Take this housewife case," she continued, putting a small embroidered needle-case into Jeanie's hands: "do not open it now, but at your leisure you will find something in it which will remind you that you have had an interview with Queen Caroline."

Jeanie, having her suspicions thus confirmed, dropped on her knees, and would have expanded herself in gratitude; but the Duke, who was upon thorns lest she should say more or less than just enough, touched his chin once more.

"Our business is, I think, ended for the present, my Lord Duke," said the Queen, "and, I trust, to your satisfaction. Hereafter I hope to see your Grace more frequently, both at Richmond and St. James's.—Come, Lady Suffolk, we must wish his Grace good-morning."

They exchanged their parting reverences, and the Duke, so soon as the ladies had turned their backs, assisted Jeanie to rise from the ground, and conducted her back through the avenue, which she trode with the feeling of one who walks in her sleep.

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#### PROUD MAISIE.

Proud Maisie is in the wood,  
Walking so early;  
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,  
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,  
When shall I marry me?"

“ When six braw gentlemen  
Kirkward shall carry ye.”

\* \* \* \* \*  
“ Who makes the bridal bed,  
Birdie, say truly ? ”

“ The grey-headed sexton,  
That delves the grave duly.

\* \* \* \* \*  
“ The glow-worm o’er grave and stone  
Shall light thee steady ;  
The owl from the steeple sing,  
‘ Welcome, proud lady.’ ”

## CHAPTER XIV.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

Born 1772 A.D. . . . . Died 1834 A.D.

COLERIDGE, a magnificent dreamer, has left us only a few fragments to show what his life-work might have been, had industry been wedded to his genius. We think of him as of some rarely gifted architect, before whose mind’s eye visions of sublime temples were continually floating, but whose realized work consists of a few pillars and friezes, exquisitely beautiful, indeed, but lying on the chosen site unfinished and unset.

Born at Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, on October 21, 1772, this youngest child of a poor country vicar entered the hard school of an orphan’s life at Christ’s Hospital. There, within gray old walls, began his cherished friendship with the gentle Charles Lamb. Already, under the long blue coat of “ the inspired charity-boy,” the nature of the man was burning. He dreamed away his days ; he read books of every kind with insatiable relish, until history, novels, even poetry, began to pall upon his taste, and nothing but metaphysics could afford any delight to the boy of fifteen. The sonnets of Bowles, however, struck a chord whose vibration filled his young soul with

pleasure. During the two years of his residence at Cambridge, whither he went in 1791 as an exhibitor of Jesus College, his habits were formed. Ideals, ever floating before his mind, sadly impeded the work of the student. His first success—a gold medal for Greek verse—was followed by some defeats, which, coupled with a little debt and his admiration for revolutionary France, caused him to abandon a college life without taking his degree.

Starving in London, he enlisted in the 15th Light Dragoons under the name of Comberbacke, and spent four wretched months in trying to fathom the mysteries of drill and stable work. The discovery of his classical attainments by the captain of his troop, who observed some Latin words written under his saddle as it hung upon the wall, led to his release from this position.

We then find him at Bristol, with his new friend Southey and four other young enthusiasts, building a splendid castle in the air. They were to sail over the Atlantic to the banks of the Susquehanna, and there to found a *Pantisocracy*, or domestic republic, where all goods should be property in common, and the leisure of the workmen should be devoted to literature. Only one thing was wanted to carry out the scheme—money. Failing this, the pretty bubble burst. Probable starvation by the Avon, instead of republican ease and plenty by the Susquehanna, was the stern reality which now pushed its dark face into the dreamer's life. His pen, employed by a Bristol bookseller, kept off this ugly shape; and soon the struggler added to his difficulties by an early marriage with a girl, whose sister became Southey's wife.

A cottage at Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire, at the foot of the Quantock Hills, received the youthful pair, who resided there for about three years. Out of this, the brightest period in a desultory life, blossomed some of the finest poetry that Coleridge has written. An *Ode to the Departing Year*, and that



piece entitled *France*, which Shelley loved so well, are among the productions of this time. But finer than these are two works of the same period, which deserve more than passing mention. *The Ancient Mariner* was written at Stowey, and there *Christabel* was begun.

*The Ancient Mariner* is a poem in the simple, picturesque style of the old ballad. The tale—told to a spell-bound wedding-guest by an old sailor, who, in a few vivid touches, is made to stand before us with gray beard, glittering eyes, and long, brown, skinny hands—enchains us with strange and mystic power. The shooting of the albatross, that came through the snowy fog to cheer the crew; the blistering calm that fell upon the sea; the skeleton ship with its phantom dicers driving across the sun in view of the thirst-scorched seamen; the lonely life of the guilty mariner on the sea amid the corpses of his shipmates; the springing of good thoughts at the sight of the beautiful water-snakes sporting “beyond the shadow of the ship;” the coming of sleet and rain and a spectral wind; and the final deliverance from the doomed vessel, are among the pictures that flit before us as we read—shadows all, but touched with weird light and colour, as from another world.

A visit to Germany (1798), the expense of which was defrayed by the Wedgwoods of Staffordshire, deepened the hues of mysticism already tinging the spirit of Coleridge. His translation of Schiller’s *Wallenstein* was the principal result of his residence in that land of learning and romance. Upon his return to England in 1800, he took up his abode in Southey’s house at Keswick, and with some temporary interruptions he continued to make the Lakes his headquarters for ten years. He wrote largely for *The Morning Post*; during a visit to Malta in 1804 he acted as secretary to the governor of that island; he came home to deliver his eloquent and profound criticisms on *Shakespeare* to a London audience, and

to issue the weekly essays of the short-lived *Friend*, which ceased after a few numbers, as had happened to *The Watchman*, a similar venture of the old Bristol days. During these many changes, his opinions, both political and religious, had veered completely round. Once a Red Republican, he was now a keen upholder of the throne; once a Unitarian preacher at Taunton and Shrewsbury, he now acknowledged his firm belief in the Trinity.

In 1810 he bade good-bye to the Lakes, and went to live in London with various friends, who could forgive and pity the thriftless, erring 1810 man for the sake of his splendid genius. His A.D. natural sloth and dreaminess were increased by the destructive habit of opium-eating, or rather laudanum-drinking, which he had formed while using the drug as a medicine. Deeper and deeper he plunged into those abysses of German metaphysics towards which he had been gradually drifting. Various convulsive efforts at hard work were made by him at times, but all his great plans dissolved into vapour and vanished. The roof of Gillman, a friendly surgeon at Highgate, sheltered the dreamer during his last nineteen years; and there the old man used for hours to pour out his wonderful talk in a stream, which was often turbid and slow, but which sometimes broke into a brilliant run, or discovered, through its clear crystal, the rich sands of gold and shining gems below. At Highgate he died in July 1834.

Carlyle's portrait of Coleridge "sitting on the brow of Highgate Hill," to be found in his *Life of Sterling*, is remarkably vivid:—"Brow and head were round, and of massive weight; but the face was flabby and irresolute. The deep eyes, of a light hazel, were as full of sorrow as of inspiration; confused pain looked mildly from them, as in a kind of mild astonishment. The whole figure and air, good and amiable otherwise, might be called flabby and irresolute; expressive of weakness under possibility of strength. He hung

- loosely on his limbs, with knees bent, and stooping attitude ; in walking, he rather shuffled than decisively stepped ; and a lady once remarked, he never could fix which side of the garden-walk would suit him best, but continually shifted, in cork-screw fashion, and kept trying both. A heavy-laden, high-aspiring, and surely much-suffering man. His voice, naturally soft and good, had contracted itself into a plaintive snuffle and sing-song ; he spoke as if preaching—you would have said preaching earnestly, and also hopelessly, the weightiest things. I still recollect his ‘ object ’ and ‘ subject ’—terms of continual recurrence in the Kantean province ; and how he sung and snuffled them into ‘ om-m-mject ’ and ‘ sum-m-mject,’ with a kind of solemn shake or quaver, as he rolled along.”

His noble fragment, *Christabel*, has been already mentioned. Begun at Stowey, and continued upon his return from Germany, by the advice of Byron it was given to the world in 1816 in its unfinished loveliness. Both Byron and Scott have echoed the irregular music of its verse, though with peculiar variations. It is a tale of strange witchcraft. A sweet and innocent girl, praying for her lover’s safety beneath a huge oak tree outside the castle gate, under the dim moonlight of an April sky, is startled by the appearance of a witch, disguised as a richly-clad beauty in distress. The gentle *Christabel* asks the wanderer into the castle ; the disguise is there laid aside ; some horrible shape smites the poor hospitable maid into a trance ; and the blinking glance of the witch’s small, dull, snake-like eyes, shot suddenly at the shuddering victim, clouds the innocent blue of her eye with a passive imitation of the same hateful look. In dealing with mystic themes like this, Coleridge was master of a spell over thought and language such as no other writer has ever possessed. But his inspiration came in gusts, and fragments grew around him at such a rate that soon the difficulty of choosing

what to finish caused all to remain undone. His life was a succession of beginnings which never saw an end. He went to college, but took no degree. He prepared for emigration, but did not start. He got married, but left others to support his wife and children. At twenty-five he planned an epic on the Destruction of Jerusalem; but to-morrow—and to-morrow—and to-morrow—passed without one written line. A great genius with a great infirmity—the union of mental strength and feebleness—he claims at once our reverence and our deep compassion.

Besides the works already named there are two which cannot be forgotten, as examples of the varied powers of this great poet. For simple tenderness and depth of natural feeling his little love-song of *Genevieve* cannot be surpassed. And the *Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni*, of which we quote some lines, has in it an exultant sublimity akin to Milton's song. While the melody of *Genevieve* most resembles the sighing of "a lonely flute," stealing through the odours of the summer dusk, this hymn to Mount Blanc swells through the darkness of the Alpine morning up to the summit of the snows, with all the tumultuous music of a vast organ, pealing in unison with the chorus of ten thousand rejoicing voices.

Coleridge's *Lectures on Shakespeare* have been already named. The review of Wordsworth's poetry, which may be found in his *Biographia Literaria*, has been pronounced to be "perhaps the most philosophical piece of criticism extant in the language."

#### FROM THE HYMN AT CHAMOUNI.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the vale !  
O struggling with the darkness all the night,  
And visited all night by troops of stars,  
Or when they climb the sky, or when they sink !  
Companion of the morning star at dawn,  
Thyself earth's rosy star, and of the dawn  
Co-herald ! wake, O wake, and utter praise !  
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth ?

Who filled thy countenance with rosy light ?  
 Who made thee parent of perpetual streams ?  
 And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad !  
 Who called you forth from night and utter death,  
 From dark and icy caverns called you forth,  
 Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,  
 For ever shattered, and the same for ever ?  
 Who gave you your invulnerable life,  
 Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,  
 Unceasing thunder and eternal foam ?  
 And who commanded—and the silence came—  
 Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest ?  
 Ye ice-falls ! ye that from the mountain's brow  
 Adown enormous ravines slope amain—  
 Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,  
 And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge !  
 Motionless torrents ! silent cataracts !  
 Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven  
 Beneath the keen full moon ? Who bade the sun  
 Clothe you with rainbows ? Who, with living flowers  
 Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet ?  
 God ! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,  
 Answer ! and let the ice-plains echo, God !  
 God ! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice !  
 Ye pine groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds !  
 And they, too, have a voice, yon piles of snow,  
 And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God !

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## CHAPTER XV.

CHARLES LAMB.

Born 1775 A.D. . . . . Died 1834 A.D.

CHARLES LAMB, "a good man of most dear memory," as Wordsworth calls him, was born of humble but not undistinguished parentage. His father—"clerk, good servant, dresser, flapper, guide, stop-watch, auditor, and treasurer" to Mr. Salt of the Inner Temple—is a familiar friend to all lovers of "the gentle Elia" under the name of Lovel in the exquisite *Old Benchers of the Inner Temple*. He published a volume of *Poetical Pieces on Several Occasions*; "moulded heads in clay or plaster of Paris to admiration; turned cribbage-boards, and such small cabinet toys, to perfection;

took a hand at quadrille or bowls with equal facility ; ” and “ made punch better than any man of his degree in England.” This good man’s wife might have been “ taken for a sister of Mrs. Siddons,” and his eldest son, John, lives for ever as James Elia in his more famous brother’s fascinating essay on *My Relations*. Another member of the family, his sister Mary, had considerable literary gifts, and was intimately associated with the whole course of his life.

Charles was born in Crown Office Row, Inner Temple, on February 10, 1775, and entered Christ’s Hospital at the age of seven. All his earliest associations were with the busy streets of the London he loved so well ; and the two essays—written at considerable intervals, one professedly in answer to the other—in which his schooldays are so vividly pictured, give an almost unique record of the famous institution where many of our greatest writers passed their boyhood.

Though his natural shyness was increased by the stammer from which he never entirely recovered, the child was happy enough among the boisterous companions on whom his unvarying gentleness inspired an endearing affection. In the vacations he returned to the congenial atmosphere of the Temple, and, through Mr. Salt’s library, “ was tumbled into a spacious closet of good old English reading, where he browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage.” He was an industrious and quick scholar, apparently qualified for the exhibitions with which blue-coat boys were sent to the uni- 1789  
versities. But this practically involved training A.D.  
for the Church, to which his stammer denied him entrance ; and in the November of 1789 he left school for “ the desk’s dull wood.”

In all probability he never regretted the accident which had debarred him from taking orders ; but university life appealed strongly to his studious and yet social nature.



“ Yet can I fancy, wandering ’mid thy towers,  
 Myself a nursling, Granta, of thy lap ;  
 My brow seems tightening with the doctor’s cap,  
 And I walk gowned, feel unusual powers.  
 Strange forms of logic clothe my admiring speech ;  
 Old Ramus’ ghost is busy at my brain ;  
 And my skull teems with notions infinite.”

After a brief apprenticeship with his brother in the South Sea House, he obtained during the year 1792 a clerkship in the East India House—always famed as the nurse of literature—where he remained during the greater part of his life. His small salary was a welcome addition to the family resources, while the somewhat monotonous occupations entailed by his office work were considerably relieved by almost nightly talks with his former schoolfellow and friend, Coleridge, at the “ Salutation and Cat.” Somewhere about this time he fell in love ; but, like most writers given to autobiography, he seldom spoke of what moved him deeply, and we really know little of the affair or its consequences.

He certainly became subject to more or less pronounced attacks of melancholia ; but the family life was happy and tranquil enough, until broken up by the terrible tragedy which prompted, in its consequences, one of the most perfect examples of devotion biography can chronicle. In a paroxysm of temporary insanity, Mary Lamb killed the mother they all loved so well, and never entirely recovered from the tendency involving such cruel possibilities. John Lamb, the father, died soon after ; and, at the age of twenty-one, Charles gave himself up exclusively to the care of his unfortunate sister. Under ordinary circumstances, she was an understanding and intellectual companion, though easily depressed. Any return of her malady was easily foreseen, and arrangements for the necessary “ restraint ” provided ; but at other times no guardianship beyond her brother’s loving attention was sought or required.

Meanwhile the brother and sister encouraged each

other's literary tastes. Other friends were learning that Charles could use his pen, and in 1798 there appeared a modest volume in thin duodecimo, price 2s. 6d., entitled *Blank Verse*, by Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb, and that exquisite miniature, *A Tale of Rosamund Gray and Old Blind Margaret* was written during the same year.

He afterwards tried his hand at drama, completing the somewhat gloomy *John Woodvil* and the unlucky *Mr. H.* But he did not possess the qualities required in writing for the stage; and more fortunately expressed his enthusiasm for plays and theatres in the immortal *Tales from Shakespeare* (published in 1807, and partly written by his sister), in that storehouse of forgotten treasures, the *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets who lived about the Time of Shakespeare* (1807), and in a few matchless critical essays.

His *Adventures of Ulysses* appeared very soon 1807 after the *Specimens*, and during 1807 he joined A.D. with his sister in writing the delightful *Mrs. Leicester's School*. A slim volume of *Poetry for Children* was published in 1809.

It was not until more than ten years later, when he was already forty-five, that the opportunity occurred, almost by chance, for the appearance of those wonderful and charming essays on which his fame depends. A Mr. John Scott established *The London Magazine*, Lamb became a contributor, signed his first paper—on *The Old South Sea House*—by the name of “Elia” (after an almost-forgotten comrade of his own novitiate, thirty years before); and under that transparent *alias* continued to pour forth, as the spirit prompted, that unique series of miscellaneous reflections on men and affairs which Leigh Hunt so happily described as “among the daintiest productions of English wit-melancholy.” Lamb discoursed by turns on the most trivial or the most weighty subjects, the most personal or the most abstract; but all alike were illumined by delicate fancies culled

from old-world literature, and a quaint dry humour that is all his own. His style is no less individual, defying the imitator; while its apparent freaks and paradoxes only serve to emphasize his sincere and kindly personality, and his keen critical insight. It is self-conscious, but not affected, and indubitably a part of the man himself. He followed no one, and none have trodden in his steps.

Though not appreciated at anywhere near their true value by magazine readers of that day, the essays were cordially welcomed by a few; and the first collected edition of the *Essays* (published in 1823 by Messrs. Taylor and Hessey) had an encouraging reception. The vein, once opened, was never finally closed again until his death.

The principal events of Lamb's later life (outside the somewhat acute emotional crises produced by the deaths of various dear friends) were his adoption of the beautiful Emma Isola (afterwards Mrs. Moxon), who amply repaid the loving care in which Mary Lamb so cordially co-operated; and his retirement, on a generous pension, from the service of the East India Company, after which he ultimately settled in "an odd-looking gambogish-coloured house" at Chace-ride, Enfield.

In 1830 a small volume of occasional poetry was published by Mr. Moxon, under the title of 1830 *Album Verses*. His choicest prose work was A.D. collected and issued three years later as *The Last Essays of Elia*, being of equal genius with the first series; and, in 1834, he died rather suddenly from what seemed to be only a slight attack of erysipelas, caused by a trifling wound in the head.

Lamb was always fantastic, but he felt profoundly and thought clearly on the deepest subjects. He *lived* among the writers of antiquity with an intimate understanding seldom acquired by the most industrious of students; but he never lost touch with the joys or sufferings of friends, for whose more daring





WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

*From the portrait by F. Pickersgill, R.A., in the  
National Portrait Gallery.*

utterances, indeed, he suffered some unmerited condemnation. He wrote—gracefully, wittily, and with absolute originality—of himself, for all time.

### MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST.

“A clear fire, a clean hearth, and the rigour of the game.” This was the celebrated wish of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who, next to her devotions, loved a good game of whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half-and-half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary, who has slipped a wrong card, to take it up and play another. These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul, and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated favours. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight: cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) like a dancer. She sate bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side—their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that hearts was her favourite suit.

I never in my life—and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it—saw her take out her snuff-box when it was her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; or ring for a servant till it was fairly over. She never introduced or connived at miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards: and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candour declared that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do,—and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards—over a book.

Pope was her favourite author; his *Rape of the Lock* her favourite work. She once did me the favour to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of ombre in that poem, and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from Tradrille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles; but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.



Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners—a thing which the constancy of whist abhors; the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille—absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter gave him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces; the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone: above all, the overpowering attractions of a *sans prendre vole*,—to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching in the contingencies of whist:—all these, she would say, make quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *solider* game: that was her word. It was a long meal; not like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever-fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel—perpetually changing postures and connexions; bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow; kissing and scratching in a breath;—but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favourite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage—nothing superfluous. No *flushes*—that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up:—that anyone should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and colour, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colours of things. Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a uniformity of array to distinguish them; but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit from dressing up his tenantry in red jackets, that never were to be marshalled—never to take the field? She even wished that whist were more simple than it is; and in my mind would have stripped it of some appendages, which, in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably, allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps?—Why two colours, when the mark of the suit would have sufficiently distinguished them without it?

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## CHAPTER XVI.

FRANCES BURNEY.

Born 1752 A.D. . . . . Died 1840 A.D.

THE life and works of Fanny Burney present one of the most sensational episodes of literary history in England, and we are fortunately in possession of the fullest details required to fill in the narrative.

She was born in 1752, and from her earliest years enjoyed a sight of those "unusual contrasts and mixtures of society" which give such dramatic variety to her two great novels. Her father, Dr. Burney, knew everybody, and was visited—on terms of the most cordial intimacy—by the leaders of fashion, politics, literature, and art. Fanny and her sisters, on the other hand, were no less readily "suffered to mix freely with those whom butlers and waiting-maids call vulgar." All the family were clever, observant, and attractive; the future authoress herself not being considered in childhood at all a specially remarkable member of the group. Her younger sister writes: "The characteristics of Frances seem to be sense, sensibility, and bashfulness, and even a degree of prudery. Her understanding is superior, but her diffidence gives her a bashfulness before company with whom she is not intimate which is a disadvantage to her."

But meanwhile "the old lady," as she was called in the family, kept her eyes open and her imagination active; wrote long gossiping letters and humorous journals; worked as an amanuensis to her indefatigable father, himself a copious author; and (at the age of sixteen) was induced by the second Mrs. Burney to burn a pile of original manuscripts, including at least "one tale of considerable length." She had no education in the ordinary sense of the word, but acquired the elements of culture from her surroundings, and

an eager desire for improvement from her "unbounded affection and veneration for her father."

The destruction of her childish literary efforts was fortunately powerless to check the promptings of genius ; and, in the odd quarters of an hour she could spare from mornings compulsorily devoted to needle-work and a hundred other domestic avocations, she scribbled *Evelina* on loose sheets of paper, and copied it all out in a feigned upright hand.

1776 The first draft was finished in 1776, at the A.D. age of twenty-four, and the copying occupied nearly all the subsequent year. It was refused by Dodsley, but accepted by one Mr. Lowndes, a bookseller, who did not even know the real name of the author.

Only a few members of the family had been permitted to share the secret, and when it came out during the January of 1778, Dr. Burney actually bought a copy in order to see for himself what every one was talking about. But the proud father had no idea of hiding the family light under a bushel ; he whispered the truth to Mrs. Thrale, and Fanny quickly became the pet of London. Johnson, Burke, Horace Walpole, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the whole crowd of fashionable *literati* were eager for her friendship ; and her journals of this period contain a vivid picture of the century which fairly rivals the inimitable Boswell.

Under the stimulus of such universal homage, and with the dread of proving unworthy, Miss Burney set to work upon *Cecilia* (1782), a longer and more ambitious effort, with even greater variety of characters, but less spontaneous in emotion and less natural in style.

Popularity brought its own Nemesis. Under pressure from the more injudicious of her friends (curiously enough, including Dr. Burney), and sorely against her own inclination, Miss Burney accepted a post in the queen's household, where for five years she endured the drudgery of long hours and tiresome duties, further

embittered by the stupid tyranny of the chief robe-keeper, Mrs. Schwellenberg. Her only consolation was derived from the equerries, who varied constantly from the agreeable to the absurd. Here again her *Journals* are of much historical value. She grew steadily weaker in health, however, and complained bitterly to her correspondents; but it was only "the voice of England crying shame" which at length roused her father to interference, and she was grudgingly permitted to retire.

The rest of her life was passed in comparative retirement. A married sister had settled near Juniper Hall, the home of many distinguished French emigrants, among whom the gallant General D'Arblay soon fell in love with and married our young novelist. Madame D'Arblay became a model housewife, absorbed in her husband and son, never apparently again troubled with the itch of authorship. When, at different times, money was wanted in that modest home, she wrote and published two novels which quickly sold in their thousands. But *Camilla* (1796) and *The Wanderer* (1814) are truly wearisome productions—bombastic and affected in style, hackneyed in sentiment, and in every way conventional. She moved once again in society while on visits to France during the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century; but her later years were fully occupied by the arduous labour involved in preparing the *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, and after the deaths of father, husband, and son, she herself passed away in 1840 at the advanced age of 1840 eighty-eight.

A.D.

Miss Burney's position in literary history is unique. Though Fielding and Richardson had recently established the domestic novel (as opposed to the extravagantly romantic) in England, her work is perfectly spontaneous, independent, and original. *Evelina* was written entirely to please herself, to express herself, though she never forgot that the letters in which the story is principally told were supposed to

be by a girl of seventeen—that is, about eight years younger than the author. It contains, perhaps, the most brilliant and the gayest record of a picturesque society ever penned with no ulterior purpose, no studied art. Miss Burney is an unconscious realist, secured from slavish copying by the infectious humour of healthy girlhood's sunny nature.

The narrative form of *Cecilia* was not so well suited to her genius. The influence of Johnson was so dominant that, while she did not exactly copy his periods, she certainly composed her sentences with the idea of pleasing him. Still the gaiety, the observation, the natural sentiments are all her own. The fullness and colouring of the picture even exceed those of *Evelina*.

Finally, Fanny Burney's triumph was the triumph of her sex. She proved beyond cavil that a lady could write novels (amusing novels that bore no resemblance to a tract) without ceasing to be modest and respectable. She laid the foundation, so ably supported during her own lifetime by the even greater Jane Austen, of that long line of women who to-day have taken their assured place among the finest novelists of our language.

#### EVELINA.

Miss Mirvan was soon engaged ; and presently after, a very fashionable gay-looking man, who seemed about thirty years of age, addressed himself to me, and begged to have the honour of dancing with me. Now Maria's partner was a gentleman of Mrs. Mirvan's acquaintance ; for she had told us it was highly improper for young women to dance with strangers at any public assembly. Indeed it was by no means my wish so to do : yet I did not like to confine myself from dancing at all ; neither did I dare refuse this gentleman as I had done Mr. Lovel, and then, if any acquaintance should offer, accept him ; and so, all these reasons combining, induced me to tell him—yet I blush to write it to you !—that I was *already engaged* ; by which I meant to keep myself at liberty to dance, or not, as matters should fall out.

I suppose my consciousness betrayed my artifice, for he looked at me as if incredulous ; and, instead of being satisfied with my answer and leaving me, according to my expectation, he walked at my side, and, with the greatest ease imaginable, began a conversa-

tion in the free style which only belongs to old and intimate acquaintance. But, what was most provoking, he asked me a thousand questions concerning *the partner to whom I was engaged*. And at last he said, "Is it really possible that a man whom you have honoured with your acceptance can fail to be at hand to profit from your goodness?"

I felt extremely foolish; and begged Mrs. Mirvan to lead to a seat; which she very obligingly did. The captain sat next her; and to my great surprise, this gentleman thought proper to follow, and seat himself next to me.

"What an insensible!" continued he; "why, Madam, you are missing the most delightful dance in the world!—the man must be either mad or a fool. Which do you incline to think him yourself?"

"Neither, Sir," answered I, in some confusion.

He begged my pardon for the freedom of his supposition, saying: "I really was off my guard, from astonishment that any man can be so much and so unaccountably his own enemy. But where, Madam, can he possibly be?—has he left the room? or has not he been in it?"

"Indeed, Sir," said I peevishly, "I know nothing of him."

"I don't wonder that you are disconcerted, Madam; it is really very provoking. The best part of the evening will be absolutely lost. He deserves not that you should wait for him."

"I do not, Sir," said I, "and I beg you not to—"

"Mortifying, indeed, Madam," interrupted he—"a lady to wait for a gentleman! O fie! careless fellow! What can detain him? Will you give me leave to seek him?"

"If you please, Sir," answered I, quite terrified lest Mrs. Mirvan should attend to him; for she looked very much surprised at seeing me enter into conversation with a stranger.

"With all my heart," cried he; "pray, what coat has he on?"

"Indeed I never looked at it."

"Out upon him!" cried he. "What! did he address you in a coat not worth looking at? What a shabby wretch!"

How ridiculous! I really could not help laughing, which I fear encouraged him, for he went on,—

"Charming creature!—and can you really bear ill usage with so much sweetness? Can you, *like patience on a monument*, smile in the midst of disappointment?—For my part, though I am not the offended person, my indignation is so great, that I long to kick the fellow round the room!—unless, indeed—(hesitating and looking earnestly at me), unless, indeed—it is a partner of your own *creating*?"

I was dreadfully abashed, and could not make any answer.

"But no!" cried he (again, and with warmth), "it cannot be that you are so cruel! Softness itself is painted in your eyes. You could not, surely, have the barbarity so wantonly to trifle with my misery."

I turned away from this nonsense with real disgust. Mrs. Mirvan saw my confusion, but was perplexed what to think of it, and I could not explain to her the cause, lest the captain should hear me. I therefore proposed to walk; she consented, and we all rose; but, would you believe it? this man had the assurance to rise too, and walk close by my side, as if of my party!



"Now," cried he, "I hope we shall see this ingrate. Is that he? —(pointing to an old man who was lame)—or that?" And in this manner he asked me of whoever was old or ugly in the room. I made no sort of answer; and when he found that I was resolutely silent, and walked on as much as I could without observing him, he suddenly stamped his foot, and cried out in a passion, "Fool! idiot! booby!"

I turned hastily toward him. "O Madam," continued he, "forgive my vehemence; but I am distracted to think there should exist a wretch who can slight a blessing for which I would forfeit my life! O that I could but meet him! I would soon—— But I grow angry: pardon me, Madam, my passions are violent, and your injuries affect me!"

I began to apprehend he was a madman, and stared at him with the utmost astonishment. "I see you are moved, Madam," said he: "generous creature!—but don't be alarmed, I am cool again. I am indeed,—upon my soul, I am;—I entreat you, most lovely of mortals! I entreat you to be easy."

"Indeed, Sir," said I, very seriously, "I must insist upon your leaving me: you are quite a stranger to me, and I am both unused and averse to your language and your manners."

This seemed to have some effect on him. He made me a low bow, begged my pardon, and vowed he would not for the world offend me.

"Then, Sir, you must leave me," cried I. "I am gone, Madam, I am gone!" with a most tragical air; and he marched away at a quick pace out of sight in a moment; but before I had time to congratulate myself, he was again at my elbow.

"And could you really let me go, and not be sorry? Can you see me suffer torments inexpressible, and yet retain all your favour for that miscreant who flies you? Ungrateful puppy! I could bastinado him!"

## CHAPTER XVII.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Born 1774 A.D. . . . . Died 1843 A.D.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, a linen draper's son, was born in Wine Street, Bristol, on August 12, 1774. After passing through various local seminaries, he went, in 1788, at the expense of his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, to the celebrated school of Westminster. From that school he was expelled four years afterwards, owing to the share he had taken in an article against flogging, which appeared in a magazine conducted by the senior boys. Entering Balliol College, Oxford, in

1793, he spent a couple of years in general reading and industrious verse-making, carrying from the university, according to his own account, a knowledge of but two things as the fruit of his imperfect undergraduate course—how to row and how to swim.

At Oxford he met Coleridge, and these “birds of a feather,” both smitten by the widening swell of the French Revolution, rank Republicans in political creed, and Unitarians in religious profession, formed, in conjunction with others, the wild American scheme spoken of in the chapter on Coleridge. Southey, Coleridge, and their friend Lovell, another of the *Pantisocrats*, became the husbands of three sisters of Bristol, all of whom were gathered in a while under Southey’s roof, for Lovell soon died, and Coleridge in his vast dreamings often forgot the real duty of supporting his wife and children.

Already Southey’s pen had been busily at work. At college he had composed an epic poem, *Joan of Arc*, for which that kindly bookseller of Bristol, Cottle, now gave the young husband fifty guineas. A volume of poems, written in conjunction with Lovell under the names of Bion and Moschus, had previously appeared; and a wild, revolutionary piece, *Wat Tyler*, had been written in a fit of republicanism. The last-named work was surreptitiously published many years afterwards by a bookseller who wanted to annoy the Laureate, then a celebrated man.

Between his two visits (1795 and 1800) to Lisbon, where his uncle was chaplain of the British Factory, he studied law at Gray’s Inn, advancing, to use his own expression, “with sufficient rapidity in Blackstone and *Madoc*.” The latter was an epic poem. This divided love could not last, and so Blackstone was at last given up, while *Madoc* advanced to completion. Before settling down to these temporary and uncongenial studies he had published *Letters from Spain and Portugal*, the offspring of his first visit to the Peninsula.

In 1801 appeared the first of a series of long poems intended to illustrate those various systems of mythology which are so rich in poetic ore. Although its sale was slow, this work did much to raise the author's literary fame. Called *Thalaba, the Destroyer*, it depicts, in blank verse of very irregular length, the perils and ultimate triumph of an Arabian hero who fights with and conquers the powers of Evil. A moon shining on the Eastern sands, with two figures—a mother and a weeping boy—wandering in the pale radiance, is the opening picture of a poem which abounds in brilliant painting. For the copyright of this work, which was finished in Portugal, Southey received a hundred guineas.

After one more effort towards a permanent settlement in some recognized position—the acceptance of a private secretaryship to the Irish Chancellor of Exchequer, worth £350 a year, which he kept for only six months—he became a literary man by profession, and in 1804 fixed his residence on the banks of the Greta near Keswick, in the heart A.D. of the Lake country. Coleridge was already there, settled for so long a time as a being ever on the wing could settle; and Wordsworth lived about fourteen miles off, at Rydal Mount, near Ambleside.

Already his incessant industry had begun, but it now deepened into a lifelong habit, until the busy brain wore itself out, and the workman could but wander without purpose and without power among the books which he had gathered with patient love around the walls of his writing-room. Few events of any note, beyond the publication of his various works, marked the life of this busy author. In a letter to a friend he thus describes a day, and most of his days were similarly spent:—

“Three pages of history [of Portugal] after breakfast [equivalent to five in small quarto printing]; then to transcribe and copy for the press, or to make any selections and biographies [for *Specimens of the*

*British Poets*], or what else suits my humour, till dinner-time. From dinner-time till tea I read, write letters, see the newspaper, and very often indulge in a siesta. After tea I go to poetry [he was now writing the *Curse of Kehama*], and correct and rewrite and copy till I am tired; and then turn to anything else till supper. And this is my life."

No wonder that a friend should say in deep astonishment, on hearing of such incessant toil, "But, Southey, tell me, when *do you think?*"

When Pye died in 1813, Southey received the Laurel which Scott had just declined. In 1820, Oxford conferred on him the degree of LL.D. A pension of £300 a year was granted to him in 1835 by Sir Robert Peel, who had already offered him a baronetcy. His first wife having died in 1837, he contracted a second marriage two years later with the poetess, Caroline Anne Bowles, who was then an elderly lady of fifty-two, and whose four years of married life were given to tending the poor Laureate, already, like the elm tree pointed to by Swift—himself the saddest example of so terrible an end—*beginning to die at the top*. During the last three years of Southey's life his over-wrought mind was a total blank. He died at Greta on March 21, 1843.

The poetry of Southey, though not of the highest order, displays undoubted genius. His ambition as a poet was great, and few could have made more of the unmanageable themes he selected. *Madoc*, a Welshman's supposed discovery and conquest of Mexico (1805); *The Curse of Kehama*, a tale of the Hindu mythology (1810); and *Roderick, Last of the Goths*, a blank verse epic on early Spanish history (1814), are his principal poems, besides those already named. Among many others we may mention *The Vision of Judgment*, which provoked Byron's sarcastic echo; and his latest efforts in verse, *All for Love*, and *The Pilgrim of Compostella*. His Lakist tendencies can best be observed in his minor poems and ballads,

of which *Lord William*, *Mary the Maid of the Inn*, and *The Old Woman of Berkeley* are well-known specimens.

*The Curse of Kehama* is his finest poem. In verse of most irregular music, but completely suited to his fantastic theme, he leads us to the terrestrial paradise—to the realms below the sea; to the heaven of heavens; and, in a sublime passage, through adamantine rock, lit with a furnace glow, into Padalon, the Indian Hades. We follow the strange career of Kehama, a Hindu rajah, who by penance and self-inflicted torture raises himself to a level with Brahma and Vishnu; we suffer with the poor mortal, who is burdened with the spell of a terrible curse laid on him by the enchanter, and we rejoice in his final deliverance and restoration to his family. Various Hindu gods, a ghost, a benevolent spirit, and a woman, who receives immortality at the end, are among the *dramatis personæ*. Scenery and costume, situations and sentiments, are alike in keeping with the Oriental nature of the work. But for all its splendour and all its correctness as a work of art, it is so far removed from the world in which our sympathies lie that few can fully appreciate this poem, and perhaps none can return to it with interest, as to a play of Shakespeare or a novel by Scott.

Southey was a remarkable writer of English prose. His *Life of Nelson* (1813) is a model of its kind. Clear, polished, and thoroughly unstrained, a language flowed from his practised pen which few English writers have surpassed. *A History of Brazil* (1810-19); *Lives of John Wesley, Chatterton, Kirke White, and Cowper*; a *History of the Peninsular War* (1823-32); *Colloquies on Society* (1829), a strange and not otherwise book, giving an account of conversations between Montesinos (Southey himself) and the ghost of Sir Thomas More, who visits him at Keswick; *Lives of the British Admirals*, for Lardner's *Cyclopædia* (1833-40); and *The Doctor* (1834-47), stand out prominently amid

a host of articles for the *Quarterly*, and occasional papers on almost every subject, which filled up the *idle* hours of this most indefatigable author. Like Johnson he was living from "hand to mouth," until a pension placed him above the fear of want; but he could not then give up the habits of incessant study and literary toil which had grown to be his second nature. He was never so happy as when he sat amid his books, pen in hand, adding newly-written sheets to the pile of manuscript already lying in his copy drawer.

## A VOYAGE THROUGH THE SKY.

(FROM "KEHAMA.")

Then in the ship of heaven Ereenia laid  
The waking, wondering maid;  
The ship of heaven, instinct with thought, displayed  
Its living sail, and glides along the sky.  
On either side, in wavy tide,  
The clouds of morn along its path divide;  
The winds that swept in wild career on high  
Before its presence check their charmed force;  
The winds that loitering lagged along their course  
Around the living bark enamoured play,  
Swell underneath the sail, and sing before its way.

That bark, in shape, was like the furrowed shell  
Wherein the sea-nymphs to their parent-king,  
On festal day, their duteous offerings bring.  
Its hue?—Go watch the last green light  
Ere evening yields the western star to night;  
Or fix upon the sun thy strenuous sight  
Till thou hast reached its orb of chrysolite.  
The sail, from end to end displayed,  
Bent, like a rainbow, o'er the maid.  
An angel's head, with visual eye,  
Through trackless space directs its chosen way;  
Nor aid of wing, nor foot, nor fin,  
Requires to voyage o'er the obedient sky.  
Smooth as the swan when not a breeze at even  
Disturbs the surface of the silver stream,  
Through air and sunshine sails the ship of heaven.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Born 1770 A.D. . . . . Died 1850 A.D.

WORDSWORTH was the great master of the Lake School,\* in which Coleridge and Southey were also prominent members. Choosing the simplest speech of educated Englishmen as a vehicle for the expression of their thoughts, and passing by with quiet scorn the used-up subjects of the Romancists—the military hero, waving his red sword amid battle smoke; the assassin, watching from the dark shadow of a vaulted doorway his unconscious victim, who strolls, singing in the white moonlight, down the empty street; the lover, “sighing like furnace with a woeful ballad made to his mistress’s eyebrow,” and kindred themes—the poets of the Lake School took their subjects often from among the commonest things, and wrote their poems in the simplest style. Bending a reverent ear to the mysterious harmonies of nature, to the ceaseless song of praise that rises from every blade of grass and every dew-drop, warbles in the fluting of every lark, and sweeps to heaven in every wave of air, they found in their own deep hearts a musical echo of that song, and shaping into words the swelling of their inward faith, they spoke to the world in a way to which the world was little used, about things in which the world saw no poetic beauty. The history of a hard-hearted hawker of earthenware and his ass, the adventures of Betty Foy’s idiot son, and the wanderings of an old peddler, are among the themes chosen by Wordsworth for the utterance of his poetic soul. As of old the Puritans had done in political and domestic life, the

\* The Lake School derived its name from the fact that its three most conspicuous members—Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge—lived chiefly by the English lakes. Originally a contemptuous name, it has gradually come to be the recognized title of Wordsworth and his disciples.

Lakists went too far in their disdain for the conventional ornaments and subjects of poetry. But their theory, a healthful one, based on sound principles, made an impression on the British mind deeper and more lasting than many think. Like that ozone in the natural air, upon which, say chemists, our health and spirits depend, its subtle influence stole through the atmosphere of our national thought, quickening the germs of a truer and purer poetic philosophy than has yet prevailed. As all advocates of a new theory are apt to do, Wordsworth ran at first into an almost ridiculous extreme of simplicity, both in the selection of his subjects and his treatment of them. His ballads, on their first publication, raised a perfect storm of disdainful laughter among the critics of the day—laughter which he heard serenely, conscious that he was right in the main, and that time alone was needed to ensure the triumph of his views. But here it must be remembered that the language in which his highest thoughts found their fitting expression is not by any means a commonplace language. When telling the tale of Johnny Foy, the idiot who stayed out all night, he may properly enough descend to humble strains like these :—

“ And now she’s at the doctor’s door,  
 She lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap ;  
 The doctor at the casement shows  
 His glimmering eyes that peep and doze !  
 And one hand rubs his old night-cap.”

But when higher themes attract his pen, as, for example, in that noble simile, among the finest our poetry contains,—

“ I have seen  
 A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell,  
 To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
 Listened intensely : and his countenance soon  
 Brightened with joy ; for, murmuring from within,  
 Were heard sonorous cadences, whereby,  
 To his belief, the monitor expressed

Mysterious union with its native sea :  
Even such a shell the universe itself  
Is to the ear of Faith,"—

his style is elevated far above the level of our common speech, as a poetic style must always be, that takes its tone and colour from the lofty thoughts which it embodies.

Wordsworth, an attorney's son, was born on April 7, 1770, at Cockermouth, in Cumberland. Both father and mother died while he was yet a boy ; and when his school education was considered by the uncle under whose guardianship he passed to be sufficiently advanced, he was sent in 1787 to St. John's College, Cambridge. There, during the four years of his undergraduate course, he read a good deal, studied Italian, wrote poetry, and when the welcomed vacations released him from what he considered to be an irksome and narrow course of study, went upon various tours—that in the autumn of 1790 being directed to France and Switzerland, although the tempest of revolution was then raging with great fury. In the following year, having graduated, he went again to France, with a soul on fire in her cause. There he stayed for fifteen months, and there he might have perished by the guillotine in the growing ardour of his sympathy for the Girondists, had not his return to England in 1792 changed the current of his life.

His friends wished him to enter the Church ; but he was born to be a poet and nothing else. The love of poetry was the grand passion of his heart, gaining strength as the flame of republicanism wasted and died with the coming of maturer years. In 1793

appeared a modest book of descriptive verse, 1793 containing two poems in the heroic couplet, A.D. entitled *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches* of walks among the Alps. This maiden appearance of the poet Wordsworth revealed to thinking minds the rise of a new star, destined to shed a brilliant lustre on the land. Coleridge, a kindred

spirit, was especially struck with the merit of the work.

The need of earning a livelihood had turned the young poet's thoughts to the law and the career of a journalist, when, happily for the literature of the nineteenth century, the kindness of Calvert, a dying friend, who left him £900 and a pressing request that he would devote himself to poetry, marked out another future for the man of twenty-five.

Settling down in Somersetshire with his sister, he wrote *Salisbury Plain* and a tragedy called *The Borderers*, and soon afterwards made the acquaintance of Coleridge. When the latter took up house at Nether Stowey, his new friend, in order to be near him, removed to Alfoxden, three miles off; and they lived thus in constant association with each other. A volume called *Lyrical Ballads* appeared in 1798, containing twenty-three pieces, the first being the *Ancient Mariner*, and the rest poems by Wordsworth. It fell all but dead from the press.

After a tour in Germany, Wordsworth settled with his sister in a cottage at Grasmere, among those hills whose blue peaks had bounded the world of his childhood. There he resided for nine years, during which his marriage and the commencement of his great philosophical poem, of which we have but two instalments, were the chief occurrences. The payment of £8,500 by the Earl of Lonsdale, in settlement of a debt due to his father, enabled him at the time of his marriage to look forward with composure to a life undisturbed by the cares of money-getting—a circumstance of no small importance to the successful cultivation of that calm and thoughtful poetry towards which his native genius was inclined. In 1808 he removed to Allan Bank, and in 1813 to Rydal Mount, both places lying in sight of those sweet 1813 lakes, and under the shadow of those old hills, A.D. which have become inseparably associated with his name and memory. At Rydal Mount, “a

cottage-like building, almost hidden by a profusion of roses and ivy," from whose grassy lawn a silver gleam of Windermere could be caught to the south, the poet spent the greater half of his life. About the time of his removal to this charming residence, the office of Distributor of Stamps for the county of Westmorland, the salary of which was £500 a year, with no very heavy duties attached to it, made a considerable addition to his private means. He owed his appointment to the influence of Lord Lonsdale.

In the following year he published his noblest poem, *The Excursion*, which brought him little or no money, and drew down upon him the wrath of the critics, Jeffrey of the *Edinburgh* leading the hostile van. "This will never do," wrote the great lawyer; but alas for his prophecy! *this* (that is, *The Excursion*)

has been *doing* ever since, making its way  
 1814 steadily upwards, like a star that climbs into  
 A.D. the clear sky above masses of cloud hung upon  
 the horizon, and sheds its mild yet penetrating  
 light with growing power as it climbs. When we  
 examine the structure of this great work—only a  
 fragment, let it be remembered, of a vast moral epic,  
 to be called *The Recluse*, in which the poet intended  
 to discuss the human soul in all its deepest workings  
 and its loftiest relations—we find no dramatic life,  
 and little human interest; and to this feature of the  
 poem, as well as to the novelty of finding subtle  
 metaphysical reasoning embodied in blank verse, its  
 original unpopularity must be ascribed. Even still,  
 though yearly widening, the circle of those who read  
*The Excursion* is small, for it is a poem written only  
 for the thinking few. Those who read poetry as some  
 do, only for the *story*, will be hipped and desperately  
 bored by the grave musical philosophy of the old  
 Scottish peddler and his friends. Yet it is not all a  
 web of subtle reasoning, for there are rich studies  
 from nature and life scattered plentifully over its  
 more thoughtful groundwork. Coleridge, who was his

friend's truest and finest critic, describes the higher efforts of Wordsworth's pen as being characterized by "an austere purity of language, both grammatically and logically." No English poet who has dealt with lofty themes is more thoroughly English in both his single words and his turns of expression.

The chief remaining works of this great writer are *The White Doe of Rylstone* (1815), a tragic tale founded on the ruin of a northern family in the Civil War; *Peter Bell* (1819), a remarkable specimen of the Lakist writings, which he dedicated to Southey; \* *Sonnets on the River Duddon*; *The Waggoner*, dedicated to Charles Lamb; *Memorials of a Tour on the Continent*; *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*; *Yarrow Revisited*, and *Other Poems*; and *The Prelude*, a fragment of autobiography, describing the growth of a poet's mind, which was not published until the author was dead. In the composition of sonnets, a poetic form of which he was remarkably fond, he has not been excelled by the finest of the old masters. As he says of Milton, we may say of himself with regard to the sonnet,—

"In his hand  
The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew  
Soul-animating strains."

"Wordsworth's sonnet never goes off, as it were, with a clap or repercussion at the close; but is thrown up like a rocket, breaks into light, and falls in a soft shower of brightness."

Some of his minor poems, displaying his genius in its simple beauty and unaffected grace, are *Ruth*, a touching tale of love and madness; *We are Seven*, a glimpse of that higher wisdom which the lips of childhood often speak; the classic *Laodamia*, clear-lined

\* One of the finest examples of Wordsworth's direct simplicity of expression occurs in the description of Peter's utter want of sympathy with the beauty of Nature,—

"A primrose by a river's brim,  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more."



and graceful as an antique cameo ; and those *Lines on Revisiting the Wye*, of which we quote a part, rich in the calmly eloquent philosophy that formed the golden woof of all he wrote.

In 1842 the old man, then past seventy, resigning his public office to his son, received a pension of £300 a year ; and in 1843, on the death of Southey, he became Poet-laureate. Seven years later

April 23, he sank into the grave, dying a few days  
1850 after the completion of his eightieth year.

A.D. His remains were laid in the churchyard of

Grasmere, by the side of his darling daughter, who had been taken from him three years before.

#### LINES ON REVISITING THE WYE.

Oh ! how oft,  
 In darkness, and amid the many shapes  
 Of joyless daylight, when the fretful stir  
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,  
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,  
 How oft in spirit have I turned to thee,  
 O silvan Wye ! thou wanderer through the woods—  
 How often has my spirit turned to thee !  
 And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,  
 With many recognitions dim and faint,  
 And somewhat of a sad perplexity,  
 The picture of the mind revives again,  
 While here I stand, not only with the sense  
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts  
 That in this moment there is life and food  
 For future years. And so I dare to hope,  
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first  
 I came among these hills ; when, like a roe,  
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides  
 Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,  
 Wherever nature led ; more like a man  
 Flying from something that he dreads, than one  
 Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then—  
 The coarser pleasures of my boyish days  
 And their glad animal movements all gone by—  
 To me was all in all—I cannot paint  
 What then I was. The sounding cataract  
 Haunted me like a passion ; the tall rock,  
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
 Their colours and their forms were then to me  
 An appetite ; a feeling and a love  
 That had no need of a remoter charm,  
 By thought supplied, or any interest

Unborrowed from the eye. That time is past,  
 And all its aching joys are now no more,  
 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this  
 Faint I, nor mourn, nor murmur; other gifts  
 Have followed,—for such loss, I would believe,  
 Abundant recompense. For I have learned  
 To look on nature, not as in the hour  
 Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes  
 The still sad music of humanity,  
 Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power  
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
 Of something far more deeply interfused,  
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
 And the round ocean, and the living air,  
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;  
 A motion and a spirit that impels  
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still  
 A lover of the meadows and the woods  
 And mountains, and of all that we behold  
 From this green earth,—of all the mighty world  
 Of eye and ear, both what they half create  
 And what perceive; well pleased to recognise  
 In nature, and the language of the sense,  
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,  
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul  
 Of all my moral being.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT.

Born 1784 A.D. . . . . Died 1859 A.D.

THE name of Leigh Hunt deserves eternal honour for his influence on his greater contemporaries and on the public taste of his generation. He acquired, by dauntless courage and perseverance under difficulties, a position from which he was able to direct the dawning intelligence of the nineteenth century in at least two opposite, though not opposed, directions. In the first place, he was never tired of dwelling upon the neglected beauties of Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and the noblest of our English classics; and in the second, he missed no opportunity of welcoming with cordial

praise the genius of the new school of brilliant poets growing up around him, on whom the "authorities" of criticism looked with scornful disfavour. His catholic appreciation and fine perception of the "good things" in literature throughout the ages remains unique. He taught the English people to read the Elizabethans, to wonder at Keats and Shelley, and, in a measure, to understand Browning. He helped, conspicuously and without faltering, in that rebellion against the false ideals of so-called classical correctness established by Dryden and Pope, which produced a second glorious renaissance in our literature.

Leigh Hunt is not a great poet; his style in prose has no polish and little eloquence; his theories on the art of writing are nebulous and misleading; but he has something suggestive and stimulating to say on nearly every book that was ever written, every author that ever lived, and his taste is practically unerring.

Nor is this all, for Hunt's own work—to which the collections published in his lifetime do scant justice—had certain qualities of artistic excellence which are permanent and unique.

Leigh Hunt undoubtedly came of a somewhat mixed descent, there being Creole blood on his father's side, with perhaps a touch of Irish; while his mother's ancestors were sailors and rough subjects, "with a mitigation of Quakerism." The parent Hunts were American, but driven out of their country for loyalty to England during the Revolution. Our author was the youngest of a large family, being born on October 19, 1784, in Southgate, Middlesex, then "a scene of trees and meadows, of greenery and nestling cottages," though the family removed to London before his second birthday. The elder Hunt had turned clergyman; but his manners were apparently ill-suited to the cloth, and the boy's earliest recollections were of the King's Bench prison and its motley throng of unfortunate debtors.

However, at the age of eight he was entered at Christ Hospital, and his *Autobiography* contains a chapter on that famous institution which is not unworthy to live beside the more famous recollections of Lamb and Coleridge.

No particular efforts seem to have been made by the heads of the family for his further establishment in life, and after leaving school he was suffered to wander about among the bookstalls, write verses, and become engaged to the daughter of a retired court milliner, then aged thirteen!

He made one or two spasmodic attempts to settle in business life, but soon found it impossible to become absorbed in anything outside literature. His brother, a printer and a sturdy Liberal, made arrangements, in 1808, for him to edit a new Sunday paper, *The Examiner*, and Leigh's course in life seemed to be reasonably established. He married in July 1809, and devoted the remainder of his long and busy 1809 life to editing or contributing to liberal and A.D. literary periodicals of the day. The "main objects of *The Examiner* were to assist in producing reform in Parliament, liberality of opinion in general (especially freedom from superstition), and a fusion of literary tastes into all subjects whatever." These, in fact, were the objects of his life.

He brought up a numerous family, was constantly moving from one part of London to another, and continued the somewhat shiftless though not unhappy existence in which his own parents had trained him.

Two events only disturbed the complacency of his existence. In 1813, after several attempts had been made to prosecute *The Examiner* for its political independence, Leigh Hunt published an article on the Prince Regent, for which he and his brother were fined £500 apiece and sentenced to two years imprisonment. The confinement apparently was not particularly rigorous. Hunt was soon joined by his family, fitted up his rooms with somewhat childlike

magnificence, and cheerfully assumed the attitude of a political martyr. He continued to edit *The Examiner* from prison, and became a hero to all friends of liberty ; but in reading below the surface, we can see that the experience really shattered his health and increased his natural distaste for political controversy. His was not a nature which financial embarrassment could stir to uncongenial activity. He turned rather for consolation to his beloved books, put more literature into his paper, and found an opportunity for the less trammelled expression of his own ideas in that wonderful little weekly, *The Indicator*, where so much of his finest miscellaneous essays appeared during 1819 and 1820.

Then came the ill-fated expedition to Italy. Byron and Shelley, already indignant at the conventional cowardice of publishers and editors, cordially invited the Radical journalist to join them in issuing a magazine for their more daring effusions. Hunt brought over his whole family to bask in the warmth and colour of Southern skies, and directly after their arrival Shelley was drowned. Continued friendship between Byron and Leigh Hunt was impossible. They irritated each other at every turn. Byron turned traitor to the enterprise on which the other had to depend for his livelihood, doled out moneys with a parade of generosity to relieve the difficulties for which he was entirely responsible, and finally left the Hunts to find their way home again as best they might. After Byron's death the facts were viciously misrepresented. Leigh Hunt told the truth frankly, and even to-day is scarcely forgiven for having dared to disparage the noble gentleman whose grudging charity he had been forced to accept.

But for his own part, Leigh Hunt was too happy at being home again among his friends to dwell long upon disagreeable subjects. He was able to obtain co-operation and help for many a congenial literary enterprise, his chatty discourses on men and books

were eagerly welcomed by an increasing circle of admirers, and he settled comfortably into the rôle of a patriarch of letters. The Carlyles, the Brownings, Macaulay, and Dickens became the friends of his old age, until, on August 28, 1859, he "broke 1859 off his work to lie down and repose." A.D.

Leigh Hunt's works are far too numerous to chronicle; they are best studied and estimated in the selections recently issued in various series of English classics. He was a graceful poet, a generous and sympathetic critic, a delightful miscellanist. Loving goodness and beauty, he fought loyally for their promotion, and rejoiced heartily in their growing power over mankind.

#### THE OLD GENTLEMAN.

In the evening, our Old Gentleman is fond of going to the theatre, or of having a game of cards. If he enjoys the latter at his own house or lodgings, he likes to play with some friends whom he has known for many years; but an elderly stranger may be introduced, if quiet and scientific, and the privilege is extended to younger men of letters, who, if ill players, are good losers. Not that he is a miser; but to win money at cards is like proving his victory by getting the baggage, and to win of a younger man is a substitute for his not being able to beat him at rackets. He breaks up early, whether at home or abroad.

At the theatre, he likes a front row in the pit. He comes early, if he can do so without getting into a squeeze, and sits patiently waiting for the drawing up of the curtain, with his hands placidly lying, one over the other, on the top of his stick. He generously admires some of the best performers, but thinks them far inferior to Garrick, Woodward, and Clive. During splendid scenes he is anxious that the little boy should see.

He has been induced to look in at Vauxhall again, but likes it still less than he did years back, and cannot bear it in comparison with Ranelagh. He thinks everything looks poor, flaring, and jaded. "Ah!" says he, with a sort of triumphant sigh, "Ranelagh was a noble place! Such taste, such elegance, such beauty! There was the Duchess of A., the finest woman in England, sir; and Mrs. L., a mighty fine creature; and Lady Susan What's-her-name, that had that unfortunate affair with Sir Charles. Sir, they came swimming by you like the swans."

The Old Gentleman is very particular in having his slippers ready for him at the fire when he comes home. He is also extremely choice in his snuff, and delights to get a fresh boxful in Tavistock Street, on his way to the theatre. His box is a curiosity from India. He calls favourite young ladies by their Christian names, however slightly acquainted with them, and has a privilege also of saluting all brides, mothers, and indeed every species of lady, on the least



holiday occasion. If the husband, for instance, has met with a piece of luck, he instantly moves forward, and gravely kisses the wife on the cheek. The wife then says, "My niece, sir, from the country;" and he kisses the niece. The niece, seeing her cousin biting her lips at the joke, says, "My cousin Harriet, sir;" and he kisses the cousin. He never recollects such weather, except during the great frost, or when he rode down with Jack Skrimshire to Newmarket. He grows young again in his little grandchildren, especially the one which he thinks most like himself, which is the handsomest. Yet he likes best, perhaps, the one most resembling his wife, and will sit with him on his lap, holding his hand in silence, for a quarter of an hour together. He plays most tricks with the former, and makes him sneeze. He asks little boys in general who was the father of Zebedee's children. If his grandsons are at school, he often goes to see them, and makes them blush by telling the master or the upper scholars that they are fine boys, and of a precocious genius. He is much struck when an old acquaintance dies, but adds that he lived too fast, and that poor Bob was a sad dog in his youth—"a very sad dog, sir, mightily set upon a short life and a merry one."

When he gets very old indeed, he will sit for whole evenings, and say little or nothing; but informs you that there is Mrs. Jones (the housekeeper). "She'll talk."

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## CHAPTER XX.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

Born 1785 A.D. . . . . Died 1859 A.D.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY was born on August 15, 1785, in Manchester, where his father, author of *A Short Tour in the Midlands*, had recently established a business in Fountain Street. But his childhood was passed in "a pretty, rustic dwelling" nearly a mile from the town, the family moving into "Greenhay," a country mansion in the same district, when he was about seven. We have, in De Quincey's own writings, a most vivid and detailed picture of these early years, filled, as they were, with dreams and trances, and clouded by family bereavements and fraternal tyranny. His father had died in 1792: the stately Mrs. Quincey,\* though affectionate and in-

\* It was Thomas himself who afterwards revived the aristocratic prefix.

tellectual, was not entirely sympathetic; and her arrangements for De Quincey's education were the reverse of judicious. He was constantly moved from one school to another, and generally found himself far in advance of the prescribed curriculum, thus lacking the stimulus to industry. Moreover, his studies were interrupted by a ramble of nearly five months over England and Ireland in the company of a young friend, in the course of which he saw a good deal of society, and became considerably unsettled. Finally he ran away from school at the age of seventeen, and, by the advice of his uncle, Colonel Penson, a kindly man of the world, was given an allowance of twenty-one shillings a week, with which to amuse himself as he best could. For about four months he lived, more or less happily, on his guinea among the solitudes of Wales; but then determined, on no very definite considerations, to terminate even this slight link with his family, and to bury himself in London. He imagined that here at least he would enjoy books and society, and perhaps find an answer to that haunting desire for something, he knew not what, which made him partially a pariah throughout life. Unfortunately, he was depending for subsistence upon money-lenders, and their delays and extortions drove the youth to endless distress and almost to starvation. His unique experiences are set forth with picturesque detail in the *Confessions*. He might, of course, at any moment have returned to his mother or applied to her for assistance; but that was not his way, and, indeed, no explanation has ever been given of the circumstances under which he was quite suddenly discovered and reclaimed. 1803

His guardians, presumably with some idea of A.D. punishing his perversity, then sent him to Oxford on an allowance strictly limited to £100 a year.

De Quincey was now eighteen—that is, about the normal age for entering the University—but he did not profit much by the social opportunities of college

life. The need for economy no doubt emphasized his natural diffidence. However, he studied hard, and acquired an extraordinarily accurate knowledge of German and English literature. Here, also, he first discovered, by accident, the exhilarating effects of opium-eating, though we have no reason for doubting his own assertion that it was not until many years later he became a slave to the habit.

Meanwhile the young student's enthusiasm for Coleridge and Wordsworth grew apace; and after missing his degree through an attack of shyness which drove him from *vivâ voce*, he found means of being practically useful to the objects of his admiration, took a pretty cottage at Townend, Grasmere, and became a member of the famous Lake School.

Here De Quincey found many congenial friends; here he married a dalesman's beautiful daughter, Margaret Simpson; and here he alternately welcomed and repulsed the opium fiend. He continued to read widely, talk brilliantly, and walk much; but apparently he made no serious attempt to commit himself on paper until chance led him into the editorial chair of a Conservative country newspaper, *The Westmoreland Gazette*, and gave him a taste for handling proofs. Accordingly, when the enterprising Messrs. Taylor and Hessey started *The London Magazine* in 1821 (thereby fathering the immortal essays of Elia), they were able to secure *The Confessions of an Opium Eater*, De Quincey's earliest work, and the origin of the sobriquet by which for many years he was exclusively known to the public. The literal truth and genuinely autobiographical character of the startling narrative, here advertised as only a first instalment, was so persistently vouched for that readers of the magazine naturally asked for more from the same pen; and from that period De Quincey had, as a rule, little difficulty in finding a market for whatever he could prevail on himself to complete. It has been said, indeed, "that he has taken his place in

our literature as the author of about 150 magazine articles," for his published books are a very slight and wholly negligible asset in his reputation. The output, even of magazine work, was always intermittent, his will-power being tampered by opium, his spirits depressed by ill-health and money worries ; but his style is nearly always carefully polished, musical, and imaginative ; his ideas are clear and well-ordered ; his standpoint is original.

Although the atmosphere created by Wordsworth and his circle was peculiarly inspiring to a man of letters, De Quincey found Grasmere an inconvenient locality for journalism, and his horror of London lodgings was not entirely banished by the kindly hospitality of the Lambs. He was meanwhile gravitating northwards, where the jovial Professor Wilson (afterwards to be known as "Christopher North") had begun to acquire influence among the budding *Quarterly* reviewers of Edinburgh. Wilson, with his accustomed generosity, extended a helping hand to the chosen comrade of the days when he himself had been a Lakist. By the practical advice 1830 of Dorothy Wordsworth, De Quincey, indeed, A.D. was finally induced, in 1830, to move his family to Edinburgh, and thus avoid the expense of duplicate housekeeping.

Here, though undoubtedly the most literary member of a society vain-glorious in wit and culture, De Quincey long remained an obscure personality, honoured of the few. Indeed, he claimed no more of his friends than that they should refrain from asking him to dinner, and it was not entirely race prejudice that pronounced him alien.

Despite his absolute irresponsibility in affairs and an incurable taste for temporary disappearances, De Quincey was at this time living in affectionate and close communion with his own family. One who knew them well declared that he had "never seen a more gracious or a more beautiful lady" than Mrs. De

Quincey; and the children, on whose education their father bestowed much personal attention, proved nobly responsive to the atmosphere of refinement and scrupulous taste by which they were surrounded. When the mother died at the age of thirty-nine, before the eldest of them had grown out of her teens, they took up the burden of domestic responsibility, and hired a cottage near Lasswade, about seven miles from Edinburgh, where they could live quietly and economically, and to which De Quincey could always retire for study and home life, without giving up his rooms in town. He retained his delight in walking, unimpaired by weakness, till he was past seventy, and thought nothing of tramping out to his family at any hour of day or night.

Thus, not unhappily, passed the closing years of this shy and eccentric, though affectionate, scholar. He continued writing to the last, giving his final years to collecting and revising the work which had appeared in so many places and in such various forms, and died, practically of old age, on December 8, 1859, in his seventy-fifth year.

De Quincey was a past master in that particular form of lyrical prose which is admirably adapted to the dreams, or visions, by which he is best known, and scarcely less effective in passages of historical romance like his *Joan of Arc* and *The Spanish Military Nun*. His intellect, on the other hand, was singularly analytical and exact. In criticism and philosophy he is capable of strong logical argument and intense dialectical subtlety. His weakened will-power, however, debarred him from the concentration necessary for the highest work in these provinces, and we can judge his intellect only from a few fragmentary manifestations.

#### OUR LADIES OF SORROW.

(FROM "SUSPIRIA DE PROFUNDIS.")

Three sisters they are, of one mysterious household; and their paths are wide apart; but of their dominion there is no end. . . .

The eldest of the three is named *Mater Lachrymarum*, Our Lady of Tears. She it is that night and day raves and moans, calling for vanished faces. She stood in Rama, where a voice was heard in lamentation,—Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted. She it was that stood in Bethlehem on the night when Herod's sword swept its nurseries of Innocents, and the little feet were stiffened for ever which, heard at times as they trotted along floors overhead, woke pulses of love in household hearts that were not unmarked in heaven. Her eyes are sweet and subtle, wild and sleepy, by turns; oftentimes rising to the clouds, oftentimes challenging the heavens. She wears a diadem round her head. And I knew by childish memories that she could go abroad upon the winds, when she heard the sobbing of litanies, or the thundering of organs, and when she beheld the mustering of summer clouds. This Sister, the elder, it is that carries keys more than papal at her girdle, which open every cottage and every palace. She, to my knowledge, sat all last summer by the bedside of the blind beggar, him that so often and so gladly I talked with, whose pious daughter, eight years old, with the sunny countenance, resisted the temptations of play and village mirth, to travel all day long on dusty roads with her afflicted father. For this did God send her a great reward. In the spring-time of the year, and whilst yet her own spring was budding, He recalled her to Himself. But her blind father mourns for ever over *her*: still he dreams at midnight that the little guiding hand is locked within his own; and still he wakens to a darkness that is *now* within a second and deeper darkness. This *Mater Lachrymarum* also has been sitting all this winter of 1844-5 within the bed-chamber of the Czar, bringing before his eyes a daughter (not less pious) that vanished to God not less suddenly, and left behind her a darkness not less profound. By the power of the keys it is that Our Lady of Tears glides, a ghostly intruder, into the chambers of sleepless men, sleepless women, sleepless children, from Ganges to the Nile, from Nile to Mississippi. And her, because she is the first-born of her house, and has the widest empire, let us honour with the title of "Madonna."

The second Sister is called *Mater Suspiriorum*, Our Lady of Sighs. She never scales the clouds, nor walks abroad upon the winds. She wears no diadem. And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtle: no man could read their story; they would be found filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium. But she raises not her eyes; her head, on which sits a dilapidated turban, droops for ever, for ever fastens on the dust. She weeps not. She groans not. But she sighs inaudibly at intervals. Her sister, Madonna, is oftentimes stormy and frantic, raging in the highest against heaven, and demanding back her darlings. But Our Lady of Sighs never clamours, never defies, dreams not of rebellious aspirations. She is humble to abjectness. Hers is the meekness that belongs to the hopeless. Murmur she may, but it is in her sleep. Whisper she may, but it is to herself in the twilight. Mutter she does at times, but it is in solitary places that are desolate as she is desolate, in ruined cities, and when the sun has gone down to his rest. This Sister is the visitor of the pariah, of the Jew, of the bondsman to the oar in the Mediterranean galleys; of the English criminal in Norfolk Island, blotted out from the



books of remembrance in sweet far-off England; of the baffled penitent reverting his eyes for ever upon a solitary grave, which to him seems the altar overthrown of some past and bloody sacrifice, on which altar no oblations can now be availing, whether towards pardon that he might implore, or towards reparation that he might attempt. Every slave that at noonday looks up to the tropical sun with timid reproach, as he points with one hand to the earth, our general mother, but for *him* a stepmother, as he points with the other hand to the Bible, our general teacher, but against *him* sealed and sequestered; every woman sitting in darkness, without love to shelter her head, or hope to illumine her solitude, because the heaven-born instincts kindling in her nature germs of holy affections, which God implanted in her womanly bosom, having been stifled by social necessities, now burn sullenly to waste, like sepulchral lamps amongst the ancients; every nun defrauded of her unreturning May-time by wicked kinsman, whom God will judge; every captive in every dungeon; all that are betrayed, and all that are rejected: outcasts by traditionary law, and children of *hereditary* disgrace; all these walk with Our Lady of Sighs. She also carries a key; but she needs it little. For her kingdom is chiefly amongst the tents of Shem, and the houseless vagrant of every clime. Yet in the very highest ranks of man she finds chapels of her own; and even in glorious England there are some that, to the world, carry their heads as proudly as the reindeer, who yet secretly have received her mark upon their foreheads.

But the third Sister, who is also the youngest!—Hush! whisper while we talk of *her*! Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybele, rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She droops not; and her eyes, rising so high, *might* be hidden by distance. But, being what they are, they cannot be hidden: through the treble veil of crape which she wears the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or for vespers, for noon of day or noon of night, for ebbing or for flowing tide, may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. Madonna moves with uncertain steps, fast or slow, but still with tragic grace. Our Lady of Sighs creeps timidly and stealthily. But this our youngest Sister moves with incalculable motions, bounding, and with tiger's leaps. She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all. And *her* name is *Mater Tenebrarum*—Our Lady of Darkness.

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WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

*From the drawing by Samuel Lawrence.*



## CHAPTER XXI.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

Born 1775 A.D. . . . . Died 1864 A.D.

LANDOR was, beyond all men, a "solitary" in art and in private life. At a time when poets and essayists alike were eagerly teaching and practising a "return to nature" in thought and language, he deliberately chose "to speak English with a purer classic accent than had yet been heard in the modern world," standing aside, with serene aloofness, from the ethical fervour of his age. Possessing many qualities inviting friendship, he spent most of his life in making enemies. At an early age he declined to reside any longer under his father's roof; he was "requested to leave" Rugby and Oxford; he tried to found an estate in Wales, and had to fly from angry neighbours; he married a wife, and found that he could not compose himself in her society.

Landor was born at Warwick on January 30, 1775, his father being a doctor of good family, and his mother, the second Mrs. Landor, a lady of property. He offended his master at Rugby by detecting him in a false quantity, and was rusticated at Oxford for shooting through the window of an undergraduate whose political opinions annoyed the "mad Jacobin." He then quarrelled with his father, and settled in London on an allowance of £150 a year.

At the age of twenty he published a volume of conventional poetry, and entered upon three years of wandering over South Wales, with "one servant and one chest of books." Here he fell in love, frequently but lightly, though his passion for Rose 1798 Aylmer inspired the most beautiful of his lyrics, A.D. and led to the composition of the miniature epic, *Gebir*. Other volumes of verse, of no great significance, appeared at irregular intervals, until the death of Dr.

Landor, in 1805, transformed the penniless poet into a man of property. He squandered money in Bath, travelled in Spain, where he became involved in disputes with the authorities, and purchased the estate of Llanthony. To his noble home on the Welsh marches he brought a Miss Julia Thuillier, a girl sixteen years his junior, whom he is said to have married because she "had more curls in her head than any other in Bath." A choice so idly inspired was not likely to bring him happiness, and, as any one might have expected, their companionship resulted in perpetual discord.

Meanwhile Landor was involving himself in incessant warfare with the surrounding gentry and with his own tenants. He embarked on vast schemes for improving the conditions of peasant life and for beautifying the property, but only succeeded in provoking opposition from all quarters. He was perpetually engaged in lawsuits, and it has been estimated that he lost seventy thousand pounds in five years.

Disappointed in the fondest hopes of his generous youth, he sought a complete change on the Continent, where, enjoying a certain measure of content, he composed his great works—*Imaginary Conversations* (1824-29), *The Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare* (1834), *Pericles and Aspasia*, and the *Pentameron*. Though ardently welcomed by the best judges of literature, they were not, and have never been, widely popular. During these years he lived mostly at Florence and at Fiesole; but the dissensions between himself and his wife having become intolerably embittered, he returned alone to England, and settled at Bath in 1837.

Here he spent twenty years in the enjoyment of comparatively unbroken intercourse with many congenial spirits. Dickens has given us a vivid echo of his most characteristic mannerisms in Mr. Boythorn of Bleak House; his work was accepted with enthusiasm, and his society sought by Carlyle, Browning, and

Swinburne, as in earlier days by Lamb, Wordsworth, and Shelley ; while his vigour of mind and pen never faltered.

In 1858 he returned to Fiesole, a veteran in letters not yet weary of art. Here he wrote the majestic *Theseus* and *Hippolyta*, and published a volume of *Heroic Idylls* in 1863, the year previous to his death, at the advanced age of eighty-nine. A.D.

Landor once said of himself that he "never did a wise thing in the course of his life," and the remark is scarcely an exaggeration. He said also : "God alone is great enough for me to ask anything of twice," and the attitude is not conciliatory to human weakness. Yet Lady Blessington pronounced him to be "the most genuinely polite man in Europe," and his *Dialogues* are "especially and justly noted for their delicate insight into womanhood." The man, in fact, presents a most baffling contradiction to his own essential characteristics. But standing away from the petty quarrels provoked by his frequent outbursts of overbearing passion, we may keep the memory of one who walked "alone on the far eastern uplands, meditating and remembering," ever steadfast in courage and loyalty.

And it is much the same with his writings. Here, again, his own words may be quoted : "I shall dine late ; but the dining-room will be well-lighted, the guests few and select." The man who was "sometimes at a loss for an English word, never for a Latin," is not likely to become popular ; but his place among the masters of English prose is established. His peculiar distinction arises from a combination of classical severity in diction and thought with unusual richness in imagery and ornament. His style is essentially statuesque and never metrical, though in the highest sense poetic. The audacity of his *Imaginary Conversations* and other works of similar form is, in almost every case, justified by the splendour of the



dialogue. While giving his own voice to the Immortals, he seldom takes a name in vain.

In poetry, curiously enough, he allowed himself less licence, and, perhaps for this very reason, must be accorded a lower rank, though here his work possesses an idyllic charm.

Posterity has justified his magnificent self-confidence. "What I write is not written on a slate; and no finger, not of time itself, who dips it in the cloud of years, can efface it."

### LOVE, SLEEP, AND DEATH.

(FROM "THE PENTAMERON.")

*Petrarca.* Allegory, which you named with sonnets and canzonetes, had few attractions for me, believing it to be the delight in general of idle, frivolous, inexcursive minds, in whose mansions there is neither hall nor portal to receive the loftier of the passions. A stranger to the affections, she holds a low station among the handmaidens of poetry, being fit for little but an apparition in a mask. I had reflected for some time on this subject, when, wearied with the length of my walk over the mountains, and finding a soft old molehill, covered with gray grass, by the wayside, I laid my head upon it, and slept. I cannot tell how long it was before a species of dream or vision came over me.

Two beautiful youths appeared beside me; each was winged; but the wings were hanging down, and seemed ill adapted to flight. One of them, whose voice was the softest I ever heard, looking at me frequently, said to the other,—

"He is under my guardianship for the present, do not awaken him with that feather."

Methought, hearing the whisper, I saw something like the feather on an arrow; and then the arrow itself; the whole of it, even to the point; although he carried it in such a manner that it was difficult at first to discover more than a palm's length of it; the rest of the shaft and the whole of the barb was behind his ankles.

"This feather never awakens anyone," replied he, rather petulantly; "but it brings more of confident security and more of cherished dreams, than you without me are capable of imparting."

"Be it so!" answered the gentler . . . "none is less inclined to quarrel or dispute than I am. Many whom you have wounded grievously, call upon me for succour. But so little am I disposed to thwart you, it is seldom I venture to do more for them than to whisper a few words of comfort in passing. How many reproaches on these occasions have been cast upon me for indifference and infidelity! Nearly as many, and nearly in the same terms, as upon you!"

"Odd enough that we, O Sleep! should be thought so alike!" said Love, contemptuously. "Yonder is he who bears a nearer resemblance to you: the dullest have observed it." I fancied I turned my eyes to where he was pointing, and saw at a distance the

figure he designated. Meanwhile the contention went on uninterruptedly. Sleep was slow in asserting his power or his benefits. Love recapitulated them; but only that he might assert his own above them. Suddenly he called on me to decide, and choose my patron. Under the influence, first of the one, then of the other, I sprang from repose to rapture, I alighted from rapture on repose . . . and knew not which was sweetest. Love was very angry with me, and declared he would cross me throughout the whole of my existence. Whatever I might on other occasions have thought of his veracity, I now felt too surely the conviction that he would keep his word. At last before the close of the altercation the third genius had advanced, and stood near us. I cannot tell how I knew him, but I knew him to be the genius of Death. Breathless as I was at beholding him, I soon became familiar with his features. First they seemed only calm; presently they grew contemplative; and lastly beautiful: those of the graces themselves are less regular, less harmonious, less composed. Love glanced at him unsteadily, with a countenance in which there was somewhat of anxiety, somewhat of disdain; and cried, "Go away! go away! nothing that thou touchest lives."

"Say rather, child!" replied the advancing form, and advancing grew loftier and statelier. "Say rather that nothing of beautiful or of glorious lives its own true life until my wing hath passed over it."

Love pouted and rumped and bent down with his forefinger the stiff short feathers on his arrow head; but replied not. Although he frowned worse than ever, and at me, I dreaded him less and less, and scarcely looked toward him. The milder and calmer genius, the third, in proportion as I took courage to contemplate him, regarded me with more and more complacency. He held neither flower nor arrow, as the others did; but, throwing back the clusters of dark curls that overshadowed his countenance, he presented to me his hand, openly and benignly. I shrank on looking at him so near, and yet I sighed to love him. He smiled, not without an expression of pity at perceiving my diffidence, my timidity: for I remembered how soft was the hand of Sleep, how warm and entrancing was Love's. By degrees, I became ashamed of my ingratitude; and turning my face away, I held out my arms, and felt my neck within his. Composure strewed and allayed all the throbbings of my bosom; the coolness of freshest morning breathed around; the heavens seemed to open above me; while the beautiful cheek of my deliverer rested on my head. I would now have looked for those others; but knowing my intention by my gesture, he said, consolatorily:

"Sleep is on his way to the earth, where many are calling him; but it is not to these he hastens; for every call only makes him fly farther off. Sedately and gravely as he looks, he is nearly as capricious and volatile as the more arrogant and ferocious one."

"And Love!" said I, "whither is he departed? If not too late, I would propitiate and appease him."

"He who cannot follow me, he who cannot overtake and pass me," said the genius, "is unworthy of the name, the most glorious in earth or heaven. Look up! Love is yonder, and ready to receive thee."

I looked: the earth was under me; I saw only the clear blue sky, and something brighter above it.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## OTHER WRITERS OF THE EIGHTH ERA.

OWING to the multitude of names that crowd upon us as we approach our own day, we must, in this and the similar chapter of the Ninth Era, depart from the simple division into Poets and Prose Writers, hitherto adopted in the last chapter of each period, and class authors under nine heads—namely, Poets, Dramatists, Historians, Novelists, Essayists and Critics, Scientific Writers, Theologians and Scholars, Travellers, and Translators. Those names which limited space prevents us from noticing at any length will form a list at the end of each section.

## POETS.

SAMUEL ROGERS (1763–1855), a London banker, whose reputation as a poet has much declined, was born at Stoke Newington, a suburb of London. His chief poems are *The Pleasures of Memory* (1792), *Columbus* (1812), *Human Life* (1819), and *Italy*, of which the first part appeared in 1822. A graceful and gentle spirit fills the poetry of Rogers. His love for the beautiful in nature and in art led him to delight in “a setting sun, or lake among the mountains,” and at the same time to fill his house in St. James’s Place with the finest pictures wealth could buy. The breakfasts he gave in this pleasant home used to draw some of the first men in London round his table.

JAMES HOGG, the Ettrick Shepherd (1770–1835), was born in Selkirkshire. He began by writing songs, and gathered some pieces for Scott’s *Border Minstrelsy*. *The Queen’s Wake*, a legendary poem published in 1813, stamped him as a true poet. Among the ballads supposed to be sung to Queen Mary is the exquisite fairy tale, *Kilmeny*. From the nature of his themes, this poet may be classed with Spenser, as a bard of romantic

and legendary strain. *Mador of the Moor*, in Spenser's stanza, and *The Pilgrims of the Sun* are among the most important of his later works. Many of his songs are very fine ; and several novels, too, came from his untaught pen. As a farmer he was unsuccessful, like Burns. His chief residence was a cottage at Altrive, in Yarrow, where he died of dropsy.

JAMES MONTGOMERY (1771-1854), the author of two descriptive poems, *Greenland* and *The Pelican Island*, was born at Irvine, in Ayrshire. Much of his life was spent in the wearing toil of a journalist, as editor of the *Sheffield Iris*. He was twice imprisoned for imputed libels. In addition to the works already named, he wrote *The Wanderer in Switzerland*, *The West Indies*, *Prison Amusements*, *The World before the Flood*, and many other poems. He died in 1854, having long enjoyed a pension of £150 a year.

THOMAS MOORE (1779-1852) was born in Dublin. At fourteen he contributed verse to a magazine. Having studied at Trinity College, he entered the Middle Temple in London as a student of law. His first important literary undertaking was a *Translation from Anacreon*, published in 1800. The works for which he is chiefly remembered are his *Irish Melodies* (1807), exquisite specimens of polished and most musical verse ; and his *Lalla Rookh* (Tulip-cheek) (1817), a glittering picture of Eastern life and thought. Shutting himself up in a Derbyshire cottage with a pile of books on Oriental history and travel, he so steeped his mind in the colours of his theme that he is said to have been asked by one who knew Asia well at what time he had travelled there. *The Fudge Family in Paris*, a sparkling satire, and *The Epicurean*, a romance of Oriental life in poetic prose, deserve special mention among the works of Moore. Burns and Moore stand side by side as the lyrists of two kindred nations. But the works of the latter, polished and surpassingly sweet as they are, have something of a drawing-room sheen about them which does not find its way to the

heart so readily as the simple grace of the Ayrshire peasant. Moore lived a brilliant, fashionable life in London.

ROBERT TANNAHILL (1774-1810), born at Paisley, was in early life a weaver. His Scottish songs, among which may be named *Gloomy Winter's now awa'*, and *Jessie the Flower o' Dunblane*, are remarkable for sweetness and power. The return of his poems by a publisher, to whom he had sent them, so preyed upon his sensitive mind that it gave way, and he drowned himself in a neighbouring canal.

THOMAS CAMPBELL (1777-1844) was a native of Glasgow, and he distinguished himself at the University by his poetical translations from the Greek. Tuition and booksellers' work supported him, until he made a hit in 1799 by his *Pleasures of Hope*, which was written in an Edinburgh lodging. His other great poem, *Gertrude of Wyoming*, a tale of Pennsylvania, appeared in 1809. Fine as these are, however, they are surpassed by his smaller poems, many of which, such as *Hohenlinden* and *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, are extraordinary specimens of scenic power or picturing in words. Such noble naval lays as *The Battle of the Baltic* and *Ye Mariners of England* obtained for him a Government pension. In prose he won considerable praise for the critical notices attached to his *Specimens of the British Poets*. He edited *The New Monthly Magazine* for ten years.

FELICIA HEMANS, maiden name Browne (1793-1835), was born at Liverpool, the daughter of a merchant. Amid the lovely scenery of Wales her youth was spent. Her marriage with Captain Hemans was far from happy. Appearing before the public as a poetess in her fifteenth year, she continued at intervals to publish verse until some three weeks before her death, which took place in Dublin. *The Forest Sanctuary* is her finest poem; but to name those lyrics and shorter poems from her pen which live in the popular memory would be an endless task. Such are *The Voice of*

*Spring, The Graves of a Household, The Battle of Morgarten, The Palm Tree, and The Sunbeam.* Her tragedy, *The Vespers of Palermo*, though abounding in beauty, has not enough of dramatic effect to suit the stage.

REGINALD HEBER (1783-1826) was born at Malpas, in Cheshire. Educated at Oxford, and there distinguished for both Latin and English verse—especially for his fine prize poem *Palestine*—he became a Fellow of All Souls' College, and entered the Church. In 1809 he published *Europe, or Lines on the Present War*. Appointed Bishop of Calcutta in 1823, he was in the full career of active usefulness when he died suddenly in his bath one morning at Trichinopoly, having worn the mitre only three years. He is perhaps best known by his hymns, such as that beginning, "From Greenland's icy mountains."

HENRY KIRKE WHITE (1785-1806), the son of a butcher, was born at Nottingham. At fourteen he was apprenticed to a stocking weaver; but, disliking the trade, he afterwards entered an attorney's office. A silver medal, awarded him for a translation of Horace, which was proposed in the *Monthly Mirror*, confirmed the boy's desire to cultivate poetry. In 1803 he published a volume of poems, the chief piece in which was called *Clifton Grove*. The notice of Southey cheered the young poet's heart, and the kindness of new friends enabled him to enter St. John's College, Cambridge, as a sizar. There he wrought so hard to win the honours of scholarship and science, that he died, a victim to intense study acting on a somewhat delicate frame. Southey edited his *Remains*, consisting of poems on various subjects and letters to his friends.

HARTLEY, DERWENT, and SARA COLERIDGE. Though Hartley Coleridge (1796-1849) can never take rank with his great father, or with his greater friend William Wordsworth, he was the author of some twenty sonnets which give him the highest rank in this particular



class of work. It is said that as a child in arms he defined the stars as "lamps that have been good upon earth, and have gone up into heaven;" and there can be no doubt that his nature from a child was singularly poetical and imaginative, though lacking somewhat in steadiness and concentration. "There's a deal of Hartleys," said the boy in his quaint way—"there's Picture-Hartley, and Shadow-Hartley, and there's Echo-Hartley, and there's Catch-me-fast-Hartley." So it was to the end, and all the Hartleys were singularly lovable and well-beloved. Derwent Coleridge (1800-1883) wrote a sympathetic *Memoir* of his brother Hartley; and the dainty *Phantasmion* of Sara Coleridge (1802-1852) is still read.

THOMAS HOOD (1799-1845) was the son of a Scottish bookseller, whose humorous verses were welcomed by many an editor of his day. Hood created the literary pun, and stands alone among English poets in his power of using that much abused artifice with genuinely artistic effect. His best work is both witty and humorous, without losing the imaginative qualities of true poetry; while *Eugene Aram's Dream*, *The Song of the Shirt*, and *The Bridge of Sighs* reveal powers of a sterner kind. Like all true humorists, he had a melancholy nature, keenly alive to the sorrows of man, and eager to help the unfortunate.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES (1803-1849) will never become a popular poet. His manner is rugged and unequal, his favourite subjects are gloomy and eccentric. To some extent, he imitated the manner of the minor Elizabethan dramatists, particularly Tourneur and Webster; but living in an introspective age, he grew dissatisfied with his own best work, and left it unfinished. In character, moreover, he was morbid and morose. He adopted the medical profession, but spent most of his life wandering over Germany, partly in the pursuit of science, and partly to escape from any intercourse with his fellow-creatures. Little is known of the personal experiences which ultimately led him

to take his own life in 1849. Beddoes wrote a few exquisite lyrics, and some fine fragments, mostly dramatic, his fame resting on the remarkable *Death's Jest Book*, first published about a year after his death. He is the only English poet deeply influenced by medical knowledge, with its psychological bearings, and his work is singularly free from inferior passages. He is always picturesque and imaginative, never commonplace.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- MICHAEL BRUCE.—(1746-1767)—Kinnesswood, Kinross—a school-master—*Lochleven*; *An Elegy written in Spring*; *The Cuckoo*.  
 SIR WILLIAM JONES.—(1746-1794)—London—a Judge in the Supreme Court in Bengal—*Song of Hafiz*; *Hindoo Wife*.  
 JOHN LOGAN.—(1748-1788)—Soutra, Midlothian—a Scottish minister—*The Country in Autumn*; *Runnamede*.  
 ROBERT FERGUSSON.—(1750-1774)—Edinburgh—a lawyer's clerk—poet of Scottish town life—*Guid Braid Claith*; *To the Tron Kirk Bell*.  
 WILLIAM GIFFORD.—(1757-1826)—Ashburton, Devonshire—*The Baviad*; *The Mœviad*; Editor of *Quarterly*.  
 WILLIAM SOTHEY.—(1757-1833)—London—a dragoon officer—*Orestes, Saul, Italy*; translations from *Wieland*, *Virgil*, and *Homer*.  
 WILLIAM L. BOWLES.—(1762-1850)—King's-Sutton, Northamptonshire—prebendary of Salisbury—*Sonnets*; *Sorrows of Switzerland*; *Missionary of the Andes*.  
 JAMES GRAHAME.—(1765-1811)—Glasgow—curate of Sedgefield, Durham—*The Sabbath*; *Mary Queen of Scots*.  
 ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.—(1766-1823)—Honington, near Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk—*The Farmer's Boy*; *Rural Tales*; *Mayday with the Muses*.  
 J. HOOKHAM FRERE.—(1769-1841)—diplomatist—*Most Interesting Particulars relating to King Arthur, by the Brothers Whistlecraft*; *Aristophanes* (translated).  
 HON. WILLIAM R. SPENCER.—(1769-1834)—author of *Beth Geleert* and minor poems; translator of *Lenore*.  
 MARY TIGHE.—(1772-1810)—*née* Blachford—county of Wicklow, Ireland—*Psyche*, in six cantos.  
 JOHN LEYDEN.—(1775-1811)—Denholm, Roxburghshire—*Scenes of Infancy*; *The Mermaid*; *Ode to a Gold Coin*.  
 JAMES SMITH.—(1775-1839)—London—solicitor—in conjunction with his brother Horace wrote *Rejected Addresses*, in imitation of popular authors.  
 GEORGE CROLY.—(1780-1860)—Dublin—Rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook—*Paris* in 1815; *Angel of the World*; *Catiline*, a tragedy; *Salathiel*, a romance.  
 EBENEZER ELLIOTT.—(1781-1849)—Masborough, Yorkshire—iron-founder—*Corn Law Rhymes*.  
 ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.—(1784-1842)—Keir parish, Dumfriesshire—

- Chantrey's assistant—*Scottish Songs*; *Sir Marmaduke Maxwell*; *The Maid of Elvan*.
- WILLIAM TENNANT.—(1784-1848)—Anstruther, Fife—professor at St. Andrews—*Anster Fair*; *Thane of Fife*; *Papistry Stormed*.
- BRYAN WALLER PROCTER.—“Batty Cornwall.”—(1787-1874)—*Marian Colonna*; *Flood of Thessaly*; *Dramatic Scenes*; *Mirandola* (a tragedy).
- RICHARD HARRIS BARRIAM.—(1788-1845)—Canterbury—clergyman—*Ingoldsby Legends*, in prose and verse; *My Cousin Nicholas* (a novel).
- CHARLES WOLFE.—(1791-1823)—Dublin—clergyman—*Burial of Sir John Moore*; *Jugurtha in Prison*.
- ROBERT POLLOK.—(1798-1827)—Muirhouse, Renfrewshire—theological student—*The Course of Time* (a sacred epic).

### DRAMATISTS.

HANNAH MORE (1745-1833) was the daughter of a Gloucestershire schoolmaster. Her three tragedies, produced under Garrick's encouragement, were *The Inflexible Captive*, *Percy*, and *The Fatal Secret*. Of these *Percy* is the best. She is also remembered for her very numerous *Tales* and other prose works, many of which treat of female education. Of the former, *Cælebs in search of a wife* was remarkably popular.

RICHARD BRINSLEY BUTLER SHERIDAN (1751-1816), distinguished manager, dramatist, and statesman, was born in Dublin. At twenty-four he produced *The Rivals*, in which Captain Absolute and Mrs. Malaprop are well-known characters. But his greatest work was *The School for Scandal*, which, produced in 1777, is justly regarded as the finest comedy of our later literature. *The Duenna*, an opera; *The Critic*, a witty farce, containing the capital character of Sir Fretful Plagiary; and *Pizarro*, an adaptation from Kotzebue's American drama, may be named among his other works. Sheridan's chief political appearance was his great speech on the impeachment of Hastings.

JOANNA BAILLIE (1762-1851) was born at the manse of Bothwell, in Lanarkshire. Her dramatic works, written during thirty-eight years, fill many volumes; but they are nearly all fitter to be read than acted. She commenced in 1798 a series of *Plays on the Passions*,

intending to make each passion the central theme of a tragedy and a comedy. Sir Walter Scott considered her to be most successful in the delineations of fear. *De Monfort* is the best known of Miss Baillie's plays. *Count Basil* is a drama of similar stamp. She wrote also fine Scottish songs and many minor poems.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- RICHARD CUMBERLAND.—(1732-1811)—Cambridge—secretary to Board of Trade—comedies, *The West Indian*; *The Wheel of Fortune*.
- GEORGE COLMAN.—(1733-1794)—Florence—manager of Covent Garden and the Haymarket theatres—comedies, *The Jealous Wife*; *The Clandestine Marriage*.
- THOMAS HOLCROFT.—(1745-1809)—London—peddler, jockey, shoemaker, actor, author—comedies, *The Road to Ruin*; *The Deserted Daughter*.
- GEORGE COLMAN the Younger.—(1762-1836)—London—manager of the Haymarket and Examiner of Plays—comedies, *John Bull*, *Heir at Law*; *Poor Gentleman*—comic poems, *Newcastle Apothecary*, *Lodgings for Single Gentlemen*, etc.
- CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN.—(1782-1824)—curate of St. Peter's, Dublin—*Bertram*, a tragedy; and *Women*, a romantic novel.

## HISTORIANS.

WILLIAM ROSCOE (1753-1831), originally an attorney, but afterwards a banker, was a native of Liverpool. Devoting himself early to literature, he produced a poem on slavery, called *The Wrongs of Africa*. But he soon turned to the work for which he was better suited. In 1796 he published in two volumes *The Life of Lorenzo de Medici*; and nine years later, in 1805, *The Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth*, a great work, but received with less enthusiasm than *Lorenzo*. He represented Liverpool in Parliament for some time. The failure in 1816 of the bank in which he was a partner plunged him in difficulties.

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH (1765-1832) was born at Aldourie House, on the banks of Loch Ness. Called to the English Bar in 1795, he won considerable renown by his defence of Peltier, went out to India as Recorder of Bombay, and in seven years retired on a pension of £1,200. Amid the whirl of public life

he did something with his pen, as if to show what he might have done in greater quiet and with greater industry. Some articles in the *Edinburgh Review*, a *Dissertation on Ethical Philosophy* for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, part of a *History of England* for Lardner's *Cyclopædia*, and a short *Life of Sir Thomas More*, are almost the only works of Mackintosh. His brilliant conversation caused him to be much sought after in society, and thus little time was left for the labour of the pen.

JOHN LINGARD (1771-1851), born at Winchester, was the author of a *History of England* from the invasion by the Romans to the abdication of James the Second, of which the first volumes appeared in 1819. Such a work, written by a Roman Catholic priest, as Lingard was, must naturally discuss the Reformation and kindred subjects from a hostile point of view ; but making this allowance, Lingard's *History* is a calm and learned narrative, especially valuable in those chapters which deal with the Anglo-Saxons and their life. A smaller work on the *Antiquity of the Anglo-Saxon Church* displays a deep insight into this distant period of our national history.

THOMAS M'CRIE (1772-1835), celebrated as the author of the *Life of John Knox*, was born at Duns in Berwickshire. The *Life of Knox*, first published in 1812, deals not only with the man, but with the stirring times of which he was a central figure. A *Life of Andrew Melville* (1819) proceeded also from his pen. M'Crie's condemnation of Sir Walter Scott's picture of the Covenanters, as displayed in *Old Mortality*, drew from the novelist a reply in the shape of a review of his own work in *The Quarterly*.

JAMES MILL (1773-1836), born at Logie Pert, near Montrose, is noted as a metaphysician, political economist, and historian. His great work, in the last capacity, was a *History of British India*, which was published in five volumes in 1817-18. Mill advocated many of the progressive views of Jeremy Bentham. He was the father of John Stuart Mill.

HENRY HALLAM (1777-1859), the son of the Dean of Bristol, received his education at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He has worthily won the praise of being "the most judicial of our great modern historians." A great brother-labourer in the same field, Macaulay, pays him the high compliment of accepting any fact vouched for by him as certain to be correct. Having studied in the Inner Temple, he was called to the Bar, and soon became a Commissioner of Audit. Besides his early contributions to *The Edinburgh Review*, he wrote three great historical works, which have raised him to the very highest literary rank. These are—*View of Europe during the Middle Ages* (1818), extending from the middle of the fifth to the end of the fifteenth century; *The Constitutional History of England*, from the accession of Henry the Seventh to the death of George the Second, published in 1827; and *An Introduction to the Literature of Europe* in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries (1837-39).

SIR WILLIAM FRANCIS PATRICK NAPIER (1785-1860), born at Castletown, in Ireland, went through the bloody scenes of the Peninsular War, of which he produced a most accurate and graphic history, between 1828 and 1840. Southey's history of the same war is comparatively clumsy. He wrote also *The Conquest of Scinde*, and *The Life of Sir Charles Napier*.

SIR ARCHIBALD ALISON (1792-1867), baronet 1852, received his education at the University of Edinburgh. Called to the Scottish Bar, he was appointed in 1834 Sheriff of Lanarkshire, a position which he held up to his death in 1867. His great work is *The History of Europe from the Commencement of the French Revolution to the Restoration of the Bourbons*, published in ten volumes between 1833 and 1842. Nine volumes, carrying the work on to the accession of Louis Napoleon; were afterwards added. Many errors have been detected in this great work; but in spite of imperfection it remains a remarkable monument of the historian's energy, perseverance, and literary skill. Sir Archibald



was also the author of a *Life of Marlborough*, and a *Life of Castlereagh*.

GEORGE GROTE (1794-1871) was educated at the Charterhouse. Amid the toils of a London banking-house he found time to prosecute historical studies with so much success that his great work, *The History of Greece from the Earliest Period to the Death of Alexander the Great*, completed in 1856, ranks with the best of our modern histories. The sympathies of the writer throughout the entire narrative are enlisted on the side of Athenian democracy.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.—(1726-1792)—Lord Hailes—Edinburgh—a Scottish judge—*Annals of Scotland*, from Malcolm the Third to the accession of the Stuarts.

GEORGE CHALMERS.—(1742-1825)—Fochabers, Elgin—barrister in America—*Caledonia: an Account, Historical and Topographical, of North Britain; Life of Mary, Queen of Scots; Life of Sir David Lyndsay*.

WILLIAM MITFORD.—(1744-1827)—London—captain of South Hampshire Militia and member of Parliament—*History of Greece*, from an anti-democratic point of view.

WILLIAM COXE.—(1747-1828)—London—Archdeacon of Wilts—*History of the House of Austria; Memoirs of Walpole and Marlborough*.

JOHN PINKERTON.—(1758-1826)—Edinburgh—a lawyer—*History of Scotland*, before the reign of Malcolm the Third and under the Stuarts; *Origin of the Scythians or Goths*.

MALCOLM LAING.—(1762-1818)—Orkney—a Scottish lawyer—*History of Scotland*, from 1603 to 1707; *Dissertations on the Gowrie Plot and the Murder of Darnley*.

SHARON TURNER.—(1768-1847)—a London solicitor—*History of the Anglo-Saxons; History of England* (1666-1603).

LORD CAMPBELL.—(1779-1861)—originally a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*—Lord Chancellor of England—*Lives of the Lord Chancellors; Lives of the Chief Justices*.

SIR FRANCIS PALGRAVE.—(1788-1861)—Deputy-Keeper of Public Records—*History of the Anglo-Saxons; History of Normandy and England*.

PATRICK FRASER TYTLER.—(1791-1849)—Edinburgh—son of Lord Woodhouselee—author of *History of Scotland*, from Alexander the Third to the Union of the Crowns in 1603; *Lives of Scots Worthies; Life of Raleigh*.

HENRY HART MILMAN.—(1791-1868)—Dean of St. Paul's—*The History of the Jews; The History of Latin Christianity; The Fall of Jerusalem; The Martyr of Antioch*.

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART.—(1794-1854)—son-in-law and biographer of Sir Walter Scott—*Valerius*, a Roman tale; *Ancient Spanish Ballads*.

## NOVELISTS.

HENRY MACKENZIE (1745-1831), was born in Edinburgh, and educated there; he published in 1771 a novel called *The Man of Feeling*, in which the prominent character is Harley. *The Man of the World* is an inferior work. Sterne was Mackenzie's model; but the disciple has more true feeling in his books than the master. He was a lawyer by profession, and held for some time the office of Comptroller of Taxes for Scotland.

MARIA EDGEWORTH (1767-1849), born at Blackbourton, near Oxford, spent nearly all her life at Edgeworthstown, in the county of Longford. Taught chiefly by her father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, author of several educational and engineering works, she began her career as a novelist in 1800 with *Castle Rackrent*, a tale of Irish extravagance. At intervals appeared *Belinda*, *Popular Tales*, *The Absentee*, *Tales from Fashionable Life*, *Ormond*, and a host of other fictions, the series closing in 1834 with *Helen*. The hollowness of frivolous, fashionable life, as it then was, and the racy varieties of real Irish character, are depicted in these novels with marvellous skill. In 1823, Miss Edgeworth paid a visit to her admirer and brother-artist, Sir Walter Scott, at Abbotsford.

JOHN GALT (1779-1839), born at Irvine, in Ayrshire, spent his youth in an unsettled way. A custom-house clerk at Greenock, a law-student at Lincoln's Inn, a traveller for health about the shores of the Mediterranean, a writer for the stage, a merchant at Gibraltar, he at last found his proper sphere in the production of Scottish novels. *The Ayrshire Legatees* (1820), and *The Annals of the Parish* (1821), were followed by *Sir Andrew Wylie*, *The Entail*, *The Provost*, and, after a visit to Canada on commercial business, by *Lawrie Todd*. Having spent a life of constant literary toil, he died at Greenock, shattered by repeated shocks of paralysis.

FRANCES TROLLOPE (1780-1863), the daughter of an English clergyman, was past fifty when, in 1832, she entered the literary field by her work entitled *The Domestic Manners of the Americans*, in which she satirizes most severely the people of the States. Her first novel was *The Abbess* (1833). Then followed from her fertile pen a whole army of novels and books of travel, sometimes pouring into the libraries at the rate of nine volumes a year. Perhaps the best of these are *The Vicar of Wrexhill* (1837), and *The Widow Barnaby* (1839).

ELIZABETH INCHBALD (1753-1821) was an actress, who wrote several plays and two novels, which hold their place in the history of English fiction. Following to some extent the school of "sentiment," as copied from Sterne and Rousseau by Henry Mackenzie, she painted deeper and more genuine emotions than her master. Her *Simple Story* (1791) may be said to have started the novel of passion.

MRS. ANN RADCLIFFE (1764-1823) attained extraordinary popularity in her own day, though her work is now chiefly remembered by the good-natured satire of Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*. She has been called the founder, as she is certainly the best remembered, of the Terrific School, though her *Mysteries of Udolpho* and other romances are very similar in many ways to the *Castle of Otranto*, by Horace Walpole, published the year in which she was born. Though obviously extravagant and unrestrained, Mrs. Radcliffe's imagination was really picturesque; and the thrilling adventures of her faultless heroines appeal strongly to the natural and healthy instincts of youth. The length of her novels, however, would probably prevent their being revived to-day.

SUSAN EDMONSTONE FERRIER (1782-1854), born of distinguished Scottish parentage, belongs to the important group of women writers who established the domestic novel in English. Though obviously inferior to Jane Austen or Fanny Burney, and of less varied

power than Miss Edgeworth, she wrote three novels of which the wit is absolutely original. *Marriage, Destiny*, and *The Inheritance* depend almost entirely, like *Evelina* and *Cecilia*, on the exhibition of humours, and the fame of their author rests chiefly on her "gallery of originals, her museum of abnormalities." But these are drawn with a master hand. For her own generation, and within the circle from which her models are taken, Susan Ferrier has left us a picture of "manners" scarcely inferior to that of Miss Burney herself. Although occasionally her satire may seem heavy, or even coarse, to modern readers, it is always shrewd and vivacious. We may not feel much affection for her characters, based as they are on the reflection that "perhaps, after all, the only uncloying pleasure in life is that of fault-finding," but they are at all times exceedingly diverting.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK (1785-1866), "the laughing philosopher," was the son of a London merchant, but brought up by a sailor grandfather. Though for many years an industrious and competent official under the East India Company, Peacock wrote verse and prose from his first to his eighth decade, and produced a remarkable body of interesting and original work in both kinds. Peacock's novels (though their influence may be detected in the early work of his son-in-law, George Meredith) resemble nothing that went before or has come after them. Provided as they are with some slight plot, and cast in the ordinary narrative form, *Crotchet Castle*, *Headlong Hall*, and *Nightmare Abbey* are unquestionably inspired by a persistent and somewhat prejudiced, though not unkindly, determination to satirize the so-called progress of civilization, and ridicule every invention or discovery of which average humanity is most proud. Many of the principal characters are drawn directly from notabilities, literary or artistic, of his own day, exposing their most cherished foibles with merciless perspicacity. The historical colouring of *Maid Marian* and *The Misfortunes of*

*Elphin* covers an allegory of modern life. Yet he is humorous and light-hearted throughout, never cynical, always cultured and well-informed. He admired the man whose enthusiasm in reform he thought fanatical, and in practical affairs was personally progressive. Peacock's more ambitious poetical efforts have been deservedly forgotten. They are only saved from being absolutely commonplace by his deep love for music and his *genuine* familiarity with the classics. But his lyrics and ballads, of which the greater number were first published in the novels, are almost perfect, though here again he stands singularly apart from the strongest influence of his age. He is original, spontaneous, and gay. Always literary and never careless, his style has no trace of pedantry, and its artistic excellences, however finished, are obvious to the most uncritical.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD (1787-1855) will always be remembered by her delightful *Our Village*, which, though said by its own author to have been copied "as closely as she could" from "nature and Miss Austen," has certain qualities of cultured grace and tender sentiment that are quite unique. It consists, in her own words, "of essays and characters and stories . . . connected by unity of locality, and of purpose . . . I do a little embellish, and can't help it; I avail myself of happy accidents of atmosphere, and if anything be ugly, I strike it out, or if anything be wanting, I put it in. But still the picture is a likeness." In her own day Miss Mitford was charged with working in the literal manner of Crabbe and Teniers. We should rather call her a sentimentalist. Some of her work is very thin, for her father left her nothing but a heavy accumulation of debts, and she had to write for money—when she had nothing to say. But at her best she had a light touch, graphic humour, and sympathetic insight. She loved men and books, flowers and animals. That which she loved she could observe and describe.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY (1797-1851) was the daughter of the Radical philosopher, William Godwin, and the poet's second wife. A woman of commanding intellect, and not afraid to put in practice the unconventional theories in which she had been nurtured, her personality was never entirely overshadowed by the genius of her nearest relations. *Frankenstein* is a novel of marked power and striking originality. The idea of a man-made monster, living and without conscience, is somewhat morbid; but the inevitable consequences are skilfully developed with unshrinking realism.

SAMUEL LOVER (1797-1868) was at once a musician, painter, novelist, and poet, and in later years dramatist, librettist, parodist, and entertainer. His principal successes were, as poet, with *Rory O'More* and *The Alabama*; and as novelist, with *Rory O'More*, *Handy Andy*, and *L.S.D.* (afterwards called *He would be a Gentleman*). These stories treat of the middle and lower classes of Irishmen. His humour was of that order which delights in puns and mistakes in pronunciation; his taste was often at fault, and he had little sense of character. It is strange that, while tenderness is by no means the least quality of his songs and ballads, there is in the novels a singular lack of touching and pathetic passages; and perhaps no man whose poetry was so good ever wrote in a style so deplorable or so wanting in charm. The faults far outweigh the merits, yet from his writings may be deduced a fairly accurate picture of Ireland, and of the life and feelings of humble Irishmen in the earlier years of the last century.

WILLIAM CARLETON (1794-1869) was the son of a peasant, simple and unlearned, but overflowing with the legends and romantic tales in which the wilder parts of Ireland are so rich. Intended for the Roman Catholic priesthood, Carleton turned in youth to literature. His first work, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, appeared anonymously in 1830, and was



at once successful. *Fardorougha the Miser*, *Valentine M'Clutchy*, and *Willy Reilly* are his chief remaining works ; but his most pathetic and humorous passages occur in his shorter pieces, most of which treat of the Irish peasant.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- JOHN MOORE.—(1729-1802)—Stirling—physician in Glasgow and London—father of the hero of *Corunna*—*Zeluco* ; *Edward*.  
 CHARLOTTE SMITH.—(1749-1806)—Surrey—*The Old Manor-house* ; *Emmeline*.  
 SOPHIA LEE.—(1750-1824)—and her sister HARRIET.—(1766-1851)—*The Canterbury Tales* and dramas.  
 WILLIAM GODWIN.—(1756-1836)—Wisbeach, Cambridgeshire—at first a Dissenting minister—*Adventures of Caleb Williams* ; *St. Leon*.  
 ELIZABETH HAMILTON.—(1758-1816)—Belfast—a merchant's daughter—*Cottagers of Glenburnie*.  
 WILLIAM BECKFORD.—(1760-1844)—son of a London millionaire—*Vathek*, *an Arabian Tale*.  
 R. PLUMER WARD.—(1765-1846)—held office in the Admiralty—*Tremaine*, *or the Man of Refinement* ; *De Vere* ; *De Clifford*.  
 AMELIA OPIE.—(1769-1853)—Miss Alderson of Norwich—wife of the painter Opie—*Father and Daughter* ; *Tales of the Heart* ; *Temper*.  
 THOMAS HOPE.—(1774-1831)—a rich English merchant of Amsterdam—*Anastasijs*, *or Memoirs of a Modern Greek*.  
 MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS.—(1775-1818)—London—*Ambrosio*, *or the Monk* ; *Bravo of Venice* ; *Tales of Wonder* (poems) ; *The Castle Spectre* (a musical drama).  
 MARY BRUNTON.—(1778-1818)—Miss Balfour of Burray, in Orkney—an Edinburgh minister's wife—*Self-Control* ; *Discipline*.  
 JAMES JUSTINIAN MORIER.—(1780-1849)—Secretary of Embassy in Persia—*Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* ; *Zohrab* ; *The Mirza*.  
 ANNA PORTER.—(1780-1832)—*Don Sebastian* ; and JANE PORTER.—(1776-1850)—*Thaddeus of Warsaw* ; *Scottish Chiefs*.  
 LADY MORGAN.—(1780-1859)—Sydney Owenson—Dublin—an actor's daughter and a physician's wife—*The Wild Irish Girl* ; *O'Donnel*.  
 THEODORE EDWARD HOOK.—(1788-1841)—London—dramatist, novelist, journalist—*Gilbert Gurney* ; *Sayings and Doings* ; *Jack Brag*.  
 COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.—(1789-1849)—Miss Power—Knockbrit, near Clonmel—*The Repealers* ; *Belle of a Season* ; *Victims of Society* ; *Idler in Italy* ; *Idler in France*.  
 THOMAS C. GRATTAN.—(1792-1864)—Dublin—*Highways and Byways* ; *Heiress of Bruges* ; *History of the Netherlands*.

## ESSAYISTS AND CRITICS.

WILLIAM COBBETT (1762-1835), born at Farnham, in Surrey, attracted considerable notice by his sturdy,

fresh English writings. First a field-labourer, he became afterwards a soldier, rising to the rank of serjeant-major. After the passing of the Reform Bill he was elected member for Oldham, but failed as a public speaker. *Rural Rides*, *Cottage Economy*, works on America, and articles in the *Weekly Political Register* form his chief literary remains. These have an especial value, as illustrating a fine type of the English peasant mind.

JOHN FOSTER (1770–1843), a weaver's son, was born in 1770 in Halifax parish, Yorkshire. He began public life as a Baptist preacher. His literary reputation rests partly on his articles in the *Eclectic Review*, but more especially on his four *Essays*, which were first published in 1805 in the form of letters. The essays are—*On a Man's writing Memoirs of Himself*; *On Decision of Character*; *On the Epithet Romantic*; *On Evangelical Religion rendered less acceptable to Persons of Taste*.

SYDNEY SMITH (1771–1845), born at Woodford, in Essex, earned, by his sayings and his works, the reputation of a brilliant wit. Entering the Church, he was at various times curate in a village on Salisbury Plain, a tutor in Edinburgh, a London preacher, rector of Foston-le-Clay, in Yorkshire, of Combe-Florey, in Somersetshire, and then a canon of St. Paul's. In 1802 he took a share in originating *The Edinburgh Review*, and helped to edit the early numbers. His *Letters on the Subject of the Catholics*, by Peter Plymley, are, perhaps, the finest example we have of wit used as a political weapon. In Yorkshire, where he wrote these letters, he lamented the solitude of his position, as being "ten miles from a lemon." His *Letters to Archdeacon Singleton* and *Letters on the Pennsylvanian Bonds* display the same wonderful power of sly and telling drollery.

FRANCIS LORD JEFFREY (1773–1850), a distinguished critic, was born in Edinburgh. He became an advocate in 1794. Soon after the establishment of *The Edinburgh Review* he assumed the editorship,

and in that position he continued, writing the chief poetical articles, until 1829, when he retired, on being elected Dean of the Faculty of Advocates. He was raised to the bench in 1834.

JOHN WILSON (1785–1854) was the son of a wealthy manufacturer. During his course at Magdalen College, Oxford, he won the Newdigate prize for English poetry. Settling down at Elleray, on the banks of Windermere, he enjoyed for some time the lovely scenery of the Lakes, and the friendship of Wordsworth, in whose poetic school he was a promising disciple. But changing circumstances led him to fix his residence at Edinburgh, where he was appointed in 1820 to the chair of Moral Philosophy. Like Walter Scott, he won his earliest laurels in poetry; but a greener wreath awaited him in the realms of English prose. *The Isle of Palms* (1812) and *The City of the Plague* (1816) are his chief poetical works. Under the name of “Christopher North,” he contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine* paper after paper, enriched with an eloquence which struck a flash of enthusiasm even from the calm, judicial Hallam. The various essays on *Spenser* and *Homer*, the *Essay on Burns*, and those inimitably witty and brilliant conversations known as *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, afford, perhaps, the finest specimens of Wilson's prose. A collection of tales, entitled *Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life*, and a novel in the same style, *The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay*, display the gentle, almost feminine spirit that dwelt in the huge, muscular frame of the literary athlete. Three years before his death he received a pension of £300 a year.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- JOHN HORNE TOOKE.—(1736–1812)—son of a London poulterer—a lawyer—tried for high treason in 1794—*Epea Pteroenta, or The Diversions of Purley*.  
 WILLIAM COMBE.—(1741–1823)—*Letters of the late Lord Lyttelton; Three Tours of Dr. Syntax* (verse).  
 ARCHIBALD ALISON.—(1757–1839)—Episcopal minister in Edinburgh—*Essay on Taste*.

- SIR SAMUEL EGERTON BRYDGES.—(1762-1837)—editor of *Retrospective Review*; *Censura Literaria*, an account of Old English Books; *Letters on the Genius of Byron*.
- ISAAC D'ISRAELI.—(1766-1848)—son of an Italian Jew—*Curiosities of Literature*; *Quarrels of Authors*; *Calamities of Authors*.
- HENRY LORD BROUGHAM.—(1778-1868)—Edinburgh—articles in *Edinburgh Review*; *Observations on Light*; *Statesmen of George the Third*; *England and France under the House of Lancaster*.
- JOHN WILSON CROKER.—(1780-1857)—Galway—secretary to the Admiralty—articles in the *Quarterly*; edited *Boswell's Life of Johnson*; *Lord Hervey's Memoirs of the Court of George the Second*.
- WILLIAM HOWITT.—(1792-1879)—*Book of the Seasons*; *Rural Life in England*; *Student Life of Germany*; *Two Years in Victoria*; MARY HOWITT, his wife, aided him in many works (died 1888).
- WILLIAM MAGINN.—(1793-1842)—*Shakespeare Papers*; *Homeric Ballads*.

## SCIENTIFIC WRITERS.

JEREMY BENTHAM (1748-1832), was the son of a London solicitor. Beginning his literary career in 1776 with a *Fragment on Government*, founded on a passage in Blackstone, he continued through a long life to write upon law and politics. His grand principle of action, which he wished to push to a dangerous extreme, was "the greatest happiness of the greatest number."

DUGALD STEWART (1753-1828), born in Edinburgh, became in 1785 Professor of Moral Philosophy in that University. His chief works, founded on the views of Reid, were *The Philosophy of the Human Mind*, a *Dissertation on the Progress of Metaphysical and Ethical Philosophy* (written for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*), and the *Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers of Man*. His *Outlines of Moral Philosophy* formed for long a favourite elementary text-book on that subject.

DAVID RICARDO (1772-1823), born in London, was the son of a Dutch Jew. In the midst of his business as a thriving stockbroker, he found time to write several works on political economy. His pamphlet on *The High Price of Bullion* was his first publication. But his fame rests on a treatise called *The Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (1817), which ranks

next in importance to Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. Ricardo died in 1823, after some sessions of Parliamentary life.

THOMAS BROWN (1778-1820), successor of Dugald Stewart, was a native of Galloway. After some practice as a physician, he found in 1810 a more congenial sphere in the work of the Moral Philosophy chair. His *Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind* are his chief production. He also published some graceful poetry.

SIR HUMPHRY DAVY (1778-1829), born at Penzance, in Cornwall, became distinguished as a chemist, and read many valuable papers before the Royal Society upon the results of his researches. Most of these were published in the *Transactions* of the Society. His great invention of the safety-lamp won for him in 1818 a baronetcy. In general literature he was the author of *Salmonia, or Days of Fly-Fishing*, and *Consolations in Travel, or The Last Days of a Philosopher*.

SIR JOHN FREDERICK WILLIAM HERSCHEL (1792-1871), born at Slough, near Windsor, received his education at St. John's, Cambridge. He was one of the most eminent scientific men of his time. Among his many works we may name his treatises on sound and light; and, yet more popular, his *Discourse on Natural Philosophy* in Lardner's *Cyclopædia*, and his *Outlines of Astronomy*, of which the original was published in the same work. He was Master of the Mint for some time; and lived for four years at the Cape, engaged in an astronomical survey of the southern hemisphere.

SIR DAVID BREWSTER (1781-1868), some time Principal of the University of Edinburgh. The pen of a scientific man is not often gifted with the grace and brilliance that adorn his works. He spent twenty years (1808-28) in editing *The Edinburgh Encyclopædia*. A treatise on the *Kaleidoscope* (which he invented in 1816), a treatise on *Optics*, *More Worlds than One*, and especially his *Life of Sir Isaac Newton*, may be singled out from his valuable writings.

RICHARD WHATELY (1787-1863), Archbishop of Dublin, was educated at Oriel College, Oxford, of which he became Fellow in 1811. His principal works are *Elements of Logic*, *Elements of Rhetoric*, *Lectures on Political Economy*, *Essays on Difficulties in the Epistles of St. Paul*, and annotated editions of *Bacon's Essays*, *Paley's Evidences*, and *Moral Philosophy*, in which the notes afford a pleasing specimen of his style.

SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON (1788-1856) won his world-wide fame as a metaphysician during his twenty years' tenure of the Chair of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh. The son of a Glasgow professor, he passed from the college of his native town to Balliol College, Oxford, as the holder of the Snell Exhibition. He was called to the Scottish bar in 1813, and in 1821 was appointed to the Chair of History at Edinburgh. This he exchanged in fifteen years (1836) for that position round which his learning has cast such lustre. His essays from the *Edinburgh Review*, and his edition of Dr. Reid's works, were published during his lifetime. And after his death appeared his *Lectures*, edited by Dr. Mansel of Oxford and Professor Veitch.

SIR RODERICK IMPEY MURCHISON (1792-1871) began life as a military officer, and served for nine years (1807-16) in the Peninsula and elsewhere. The rest of his life was given to geology. His great work is called *Siluria, the History of the Oldest Known Rocks Containing Organic Remains*. A work on the *Geology of Russia* resulted from his examination of the strata eastward to the Ural Mountains. Sir Roderick was Director of the British Geological Survey.

WILLIAM WHEWELL (1794-1866) fought his way from the humble station of a carpenter's son to the position of Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. One of the Bridgewater treatises, entitled *Astronomy and General Physics in reference to Natural Theology*, was written by him; but his greatest work is *The History and Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*.



## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- GEORGE COMBE.—(1788-1858)—an Edinburgh Writer to the Signet—*Essays on Phrenology ; The Constitution of Man.*
- JOHN ABERCROMBIE.—(1780-1844)—Aberdeen—an eminent Edinburgh physician—*The Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth ; Philosophy of the Moral Feelings.*
- ALEXANDER WILSON.—(1766-1813)—originally a Paisley peddler—*American Ornithology.*
- JOHN RAMSAY M'CULLOCH.—(1789-1864)—Galloway—Comptroller of H.M. Stationery Office—*Principles of Political Economy ; Dictionary of Commerce ; Statistical Account of the British Empire.*
- WILLIAM SMITH.—(1769-1839)—founder of English geology—*Geological Map of England ; Organic Remains.*
- MARY SOMERVILLE.—(1780-1872)—*Celestial Mechanism of the Heavens ; The Connection of the Physical Sciences.*
- WILLIAM BUCKLAND.—(1784-1856)—Dean of Westminster—Bridgewater treatise on *Geology and Mineralogy in Reference to Natural Theology.*
- MICHAEL FARADAY.—(1791-1867)—a blacksmith's son—great English chemist—*Chemical History of a Candle ; Experimental Researches on Electricity.*
- SIR CHARLES LYELL.—(1797-1875)—*Principles of Geology ; Elements of Geology ; Travels in North America.*

## THEOLOGIANs AND SCHOLARs.

ADAM CLARKE (1762-1832), the son of a schoolmaster, born near Portrush, won great renown as an Oriental scholar and Biblical critic. He was a Wesleyan Methodist divine. *A Commentary on the Bible* and a *Bibliographical Dictionary* are his chief works. He died of cholera.

ROBERT HALL (1764-1831), born at Arnsby, in Leicestershire, was a distinguished Baptist preacher. Two of his leading publications were *An Apology for the Freedom of the Press*, and *A Sermon on Modern Infidelity*. Perhaps his finest sermon was that upon the *Death of the Princess Charlotte*. Hall died at Bristol.

EDWARD IRVING (1792-1834), a tanner's son, born at Annan, in Dumfriesshire. Having assisted Dr. Chalmers in Glasgow, he removed to Caledonian Church, London, where his preaching created an extraordinary sensation. Many of his *Sermons* and *Lectures* were published. Charged in 1830 with heresy, he was soon deposed, and died in Glasgow of consumption.

RICHARD PORSON (1759-1808), son of a parish clerk at East Ruston, in Norfolk, and born there, won great renown at Cambridge, where he was Professor of Greek. His critical pen was especially engaged upon *Euripides*, *Homer*, *Æschylus*, and *Herodotus*. *Adversaria, or Notes and Emendations of the Greek Poets*, was published after his death. In college life he was notorious for deep drinking, and noted for his pungent sarcasms.

THOMAS CHALMERS (1780-1847) was educated at St. Andrews; he became minister first of Kilmany, in his native county, and afterwards at Glasgow, where his fame as a pulpit orator was chiefly won. In 1823 he went to St. Andrews as Professor of Moral Philosophy in the United College; and four years later exchanged this post for the Chair of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh. When the Disruption of 1843 took place, Chalmers was prominent among the founders of the Free Church of Scotland. A most interesting and graphic *Life* of this eminent divine and orator has been written by his son-in-law, Dr. Hanna. His collected works fill thirty-four volumes. His *Natural Theology*, his *Evidences of Christianity*, his *Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans*, and his *Astronomical Discourses*, may be singled out as admirable specimens of his literary work.

JOHN KEBLE (1792-1866) is best remembered as the author of *The Christian Year* (1827). Four years later he was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford. When the Tractarian movement began he threw himself into the van, and indeed it may be said that his sermon on National Apostasy in 1833 first made it popular. He published several volumes of verse.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

JOHN BROWN.—(1784-1858)—minister of United Presbyterian Church  
—*Commentaries on Romans, Galatians, etc.*

ISAAC TAYLOR.—(1787-1865)—*Natural History of Enthusiasm; Ancient Christianity and the Doctrines of the Oxford Tracts.*

## TRAVELLERS.

Books of travel and geographical discovery have come, within the last hundred years, to form a very large and important section of our literature. JAMES BRUCE of Kinnaird (1730-94), the brave seeker for the sources of the Nile, and MUNGO PARK (1771-1805), that young surgeon of Selkirkshire who explored the basin of the Niger and died in its waters, have left us narratives of their adventures. The works of the latter possess much simple literary grace. HUGH CLAPPERTON; RICHARD LANDER of Niger fame; JOHN LEWIS BURCKHARDT; and GIOVANNI BELZONI, added greatly to our knowledge of Africa. EDWARD DANIEL CLARKE of Cambridge (1769-1822), a polished and observant scholar, wrote a valuable account of his travels through the East, including Russia, Tartary, Turkey, Greece, Palestine, and Egypt. FORSYTH, EUSTACE, MATHEWS, Lady MORGAN, and many others contributed works on Italy. The Polar Regions have found describers in nearly all those brave officers who have tried to penetrate the icy seas. Among such, PARRY, ROSS, the lamented FRANKLIN, and SCORESBY the whale-fisher, stand out prominently. JAMES SILK BUCKINGHAM, in Asia Minor and Arabia; MALCOLM, MORIER, OUSELEY, and KER PORTER, in Persia; FRASER, among the Himalayas; STAUNTON, BARROW, and ELLIS, in China; Captain BASIL HALL, all over the Pacific and round its shores; INGLIS, in Norway, France, Switzerland, and among the Pyrenees and Spanish Sierras—are a few of the leading travellers, who, during this era of our literature, added valuable works to the geographical shelf of our libraries.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

SAMUEL LAING.—(1780-1868)—a younger brother of the Scottish historian—*A Residence in Norway; Notes of a Traveller.*

## TRANSLATORS.

The number of translating pens employed upon the Greek and Roman authors is beyond counting. PHILIP FRANCIS (1708?-73) translated *Horace* and *Demosthenes*; THOMAS MITCHELL (1783-1845) devoted his classic skill to *Aristophanes*; while in our own time JOHN STUART BLACKIE (1809-95), besides Goethe's *Faust*, has given us *Æschylus* in an English dress.

A noble version of *Dante* by the Rev. HENRY FRANCIS CARY (1772-1844); *Ariosto*, by WILLIAM STEWART ROSE (1775-1843); *Calderon*, the Spanish dramatist, by DENIS F. M'CARTHY; the *Lusiad* of Camoens, the Portuguese poet, by WILLIAM JULIUS MICKLE (1735-88); and *Poems* from the same author by Viscount STRANGFORD (1780-1855); Goethe's *Faust* and Schiller's *Song of the Bell*, by Lord ELLESMERE (1800-1857); Bürger's *Lenore*, Lessing's *Nathan*, Goethe's *Iphigenia*, and Schiller's *Bride of Messina*, by WILLIAM TAYLOR (1765-1836); *Russian, Polish, Magyar, Bohemian Poetry*, by Sir JOHN BOWRING (1792-1872); *Norse and Icelandic Tales*, by Sir GEORGE WEBBE DASENT (1817-96)—are far from exhausting the list of our best translations. *Bohn's Library* contains a most valuable set of these works, almost all of the highest stamp.

# NINTH ERA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

FROM THE DEATH OF LANDOR IN 1864 A.D. TO  
THE DEATH OF TENNYSON IN 1892 A.D.

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## CHAPTER I.

PRINTING BY STEAM.

THE clumsy press with which William Caxton and Wynkyn de Worde printed off their black-letter volumes in the Almonry or Red-pale at Westminster continued, with slight alterations, to supply Britain with the works of Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Goldsmith, Cowper—in a word, of all the writers who adorned our literature until the nineteenth century was some years old.

Its great improver was Charles, third Earl Stanhope, who, born in 1753, devoted much of his aristocratic leisure to the study of machinery. The chief change he made was “in forming the entire press of iron, the plate being large enough to print a whole sheet at once, instead of requiring a double action.” The blank paper, being placed upon a framework, is folded down upon the newly-inked types, which lie in a “form” upon a horizontal slab. Paper and type being wheeled by the turning of a handle under a heavy square plate of metal, this, called the *platten*, is, by means of a lever, brought down upon the paper, pressing it suddenly and strongly against the type. The printed sheet is wheeled out; another takes its







CHARLES DICKENS.

*From the portrait by Frith in the South Kensington Museum.*

place, and so the work of the Stanhope press proceeds.

A Saxon clockmaker, called König, who could find no Continental printers to take up the subject of an improved press, came to London with his plans about the year 1804. He found the presses there throwing off 251 single impressions in an hour; and setting steadily to work in the face of many difficulties, he persevered until he had constructed a printing *machine* capable of being worked by steam. Already, about the year 1790, William Nicholson had taken out a patent for printing by revolving cylinders, one of which was surrounded with type, and the other with soft leather, so that a sheet, passing between them, received the impression. It remained for König to apply this principle to the steam machine, and so considerable was his success, that in 1814, Mr. John Walter of the *Times*, alive to everything in the shape of mechanical progress, gave him a commission to set up his cylinders on the premises of the great daily.

This was a dangerous move, needing the utmost caution; for the infuriated pressmen, maddened by the prospect of hand-labour in printing being superseded by machinery, would have torn to pieces both inventor and invention, had they got any inkling of the work that was going on not many yards away. When all was ready, the pressmen were told one night to wait for news expected from the Nov. 29, Continent, and at six o'clock on a dark No- 1814  
vember morning, Mr. Walter came in among A.D.  
them with the damp sheets in his hands, to tell them that the *Times* was already printed off by *steam*; that if they meant violence, he was ready for them; but that if they kept quiet, their wages should be continued until they got work elsewhere. Taken completely aback, they looked in amazement at the paper which he distributed among them, and without a struggle they yielded to the power of this friendly foe. And ever since that anxious night the clank of

the engine and the rushing of white hot steam have been heard amid the multitudinous noises of Printing-House Square.

The following announcement appeared in the *Times* of that same November morning: "The reader now holds in his hands one of the many thousand impressions of the *Times* newspaper, which were taken last night by a mechanical apparatus. That the magnitude of the invention may be justly appreciated by its effects, we shall inform the public that after the letters are placed by the compositors, and enclosed in what is called a 'form,' little more remains for man to do than to attend and watch this unconscious agent in its operations. The machine is then merely supplied with paper; itself places the form, inks it, adjusts the paper to the form newly inked, stamps the sheet, and gives it forth to the hands of the attendant, at the same time withdrawing the form for a fresh coat of ink, which itself again distributes, to meet the ensuing sheet, now advancing for impression; and the whole of these complicated acts are performed with such a velocity and simultaneousness of movement, that no less than 1,100 sheets are impressed in one hour."

König's first machine, although an undoubted stride far beyond the Stanhope press, was comparatively clumsy and complicated. Its worst point was the inking apparatus, in which no fewer than *forty* wheels were always at work. The type was laid on a flat surface, and the impression was taken by passing it under a large cylinder. He afterwards improved the machine, so as to accomplish the printing of the sheet on both sides.

A simpler machine by Cowper and Applegarth was introduced in 1818, which, in order to secure *register*—a technical name for the perfect coincidence of the printed matter on opposite sides of the same sheet—had, between the printing cylinders, two drums, under and over which the paper was passed. Still the march of improvement continued. A four-cylinder machine,

also by Cowper and Applegarth, began in 1827 to print at the rate of about 5,000 copies in an hour. Napier also made many improvements. The process of inking became simpler, and so the work 1848 went on, until in 1848, Applegarth set up a A.D. machine which consisted of a great central upright drum, surrounded by eight smaller cylinders, also vertical, bound in cloth, and connected by toothed wheels with the central mass, so that the rate of revolution should be uniform in all the nine. The type was arranged in vertical columns upon the great drum. Every cylinder had its own inking apparatus. Eight workmen, standing on elevated stages before eight piles of blank paper, supplied sheet after sheet to the tape fingers of the monster, which, drawing the paper down to a cylinder, passed it round, and carried it off impressed. In 1858, Applegarth's machine was in turn superseded by that of Hoe of New York, by which 18,000 copies an hour were printed on one side; and the entire impression of the *Times* newspaper for one day could thus be completed in about *four* hours.

Such was newspaper printing in the year 1858. Six years later, on the abolition of the paper duty, the newspaper entered upon a new career; the luxury of the few became the daily necessity of the many. Since that date journals of all kinds have increased in number with amazing rapidity, and now thousands of papers are published in Great Britain and Ireland alone. Postal and railway facilities have vastly extended the area of circulation for the great London journals; the reader in Bristol or Manchester may now peruse at his breakfast-table a newspaper printed in Fleet Street not many hours before. In addition to this general circulation of the metropolitan journals, no large town is without daily and evening papers, no small one is without its weekly or bi-weekly prints, and there is scarcely a village in the land whose parochial affairs are not chronicled in some local paper.

With speed in printing has come, though more slowly,

speed in typesetting. No daily paper is now without its typesetting machines, and these economize much time in the composing-room. In some offices late "copy" is said to be set in type direct from the reporters' shorthand notes, in order to save the time occupied in transcribing the notes into longhand. The telephone in many cases has superseded the telegraph for the transmission of news, and telephonic devices have enabled some notable speeches to be reported in the newspaper office itself.

Book printers have been slow to adopt the rotary machine, mainly because of the rough-and-ready character of its printing, and its inability to produce illustrations in a sufficiently satisfactory manner. Inventors long worked at the improvement of the "flat-bed" machines, in which a revolving cylinder presses the paper against a "form" of type laid out on a flat bed. But the rotary, in which the type, in the form of plates, is fixed to revolving cylinders, has recently been introduced in the manufacture of cheap books. An extract from an account of Messrs. Nelson's new factory at Edinburgh will explain the latest development of book production:—

"Look over this rail. A hoist is lifting webs of paper up to the floor on which we are standing, and is carrying them along an overhead railway, and depositing them immediately behind six rotary printing machines, which are marshalled side by side as though they were about to charge down the hall. Now turn your attention to the rotaries themselves. Watch the rapidly rotating cylinders of one of these machines; at each revolution 96 pages receive their impression. Nor has the machine done its work when the printing is accomplished. An ingenious folder cuts and folds the sheets into three signatures of 32 pages each, and delivers them ready for the next operation. From each rotary there extend long troughs along which the printed signatures are slowly carried by chains. By the time their journey is over, the ink is dry and

the printing portion of the work is done—they are ready to pass into the binder's hands.

“ Look now at the farther ends of the drying troughs. At the mouth of each of them you see a metal plate rising and falling. By means of air suction it seizes a signature as it rises ; by the admission of air it drops the signature as it descends. The signatures fall into channels below, where they start on a transverse journey across the building, picking up their fellows by the way. There is one channel below the first slab ; there are two beneath the second, three below the third, and so on, until at the end of the journey all the signatures of the book (containing possibly 576 pages) are collected together in parallel channels without a hand having touched them. The principle of automatic gathering of signatures is not new, but surely never has it been applied so cleverly and so effectively as here.

“ There is no pause. The signatures, now gathered and collated in complete books, are conveyed mechanically to the sewing machines which next attract our attention. Watch the whirling arms of these machines as they carry signature after signature to the required position and thread-sew them with a lock-stitch. All the feeder does is to place a signature on each importunate arm as it comes round. The mechanical conveyor does all the fetching and carrying ; the work has never to be lifted for more than a few feet. As the books are sewn, they are again placed on a conveyor, and off they go to the guillotines, where the feeder places them in position on a kind of turntable, and three merciless knives trim their edges. Back into the conveyor go the trimmed books, and presently they come to the hand of the next operator, who rapidly rounds their backs. As he lays down each finished volume, it is deftly seized by another machine, which glues on the lining of mull. In a moment the lined book is on another conveyor, moving to the final stages of its manufacture.



“Yonder are the case-making machines—marvels of ingenuity. Every single operation in the manufacture of the cover, except the ‘laying-on’ of the gold, is the work of machinery. You see the roll of cloth passing over a gluing roller; you see the straw-boards falling rhythmically into their places; you see the lining-papers attach themselves; the edges of the cloth dexterously folded over, and the completed cases delivered just as rapidly as an attendant can run them through a mangle and place them on another conveyor, which transports them to the gold-layers and the blocking presses.

“Now let us move on to the casing-in machine, which fixes book and cover together. On one side a conveyor brings a pile of finished cases. From another direction comes a continuous stream of books ready for casing-in. A pile of cases is placed on the machine. The operator thrusts a book through a slot; the machine does the rest. An arm carries down the book, and when it rises again its sides have received a coating of paste. Simultaneously a case has been pushed forward exactly over the rising book. The operator lifts book and case together, and places the now finished volume on another conveyor, which carries it along to the hydraulic presses. In a few minutes you may gaze upon a press full of beautiful volumes manufactured and finished in the short space of half an hour!”

A notable advance has taken place in the illustration of newspapers, books, and magazines. The newspapers, hampered by the quality of paper they are forced to use, and the speed of the machines, have as yet largely confined themselves to sketches in bold outline; but the character of their illustrations is steadily improving, and further developments may be expected in this direction.

The most notable progress has been made in the illustration and decoration of magazines and books. The old and costly methods of wood and steel engrav-

ing are now out of date for ordinary books. Photography has become the handmaid of the arts, and has made artistic reproduction almost as simple as type-setting and as cheap as letterpress. Hence the enormous increase in the number of illustrations which now appear in our books and magazines. Though the art connoisseur may sigh for the old costly wood and steel engravings of the last generation, and affect to shudder at the half-tone process blocks which have almost universally taken their place, even he is forced to recognize that photography has introduced art to the million, and has brought at least tolerable illustrations within the reach of the humblest purchaser. The triumph of photography as applied to reproduction of drawings is the revolution which it has created in colour printing. The old lithographic methods necessitated almost countless printings, and produced but at best a mechanical picture. The new three-colour process reproduces in three printings any work subjected to it, faithful in colour, tone, form, and spirit. The result is that coloured illustration is becoming an increasingly prominent feature of our books.

"Of the making of books there is no end," and almost every day sees some improvement directed towards more beautiful, speedier, and cheaper production. We are now flooded with printed matter, and it must be confessed that familiarity has, to some extent, bred contempt. The old sanctity and authority that formerly attached to the book is fast disappearing.

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## CHAPTER II.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

Born 1816 A.D. . . . . Died 1855 A.D.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË, authoress of three short novels, stands apart from the main development of English

fiction. The colouring of her work is derived exclusively from her own unique personal experience (for she never described what she had not seen), and its most significant characteristics are no less personal and independent. At her best, Charlotte Brontë owes little to observation and absolutely nothing to literary models. She follows her intuitions, her imagination, with superb confidence, creating humanity from her own innate nobility and her own ideals. Yet her characters are never unreal. Her passions, and the muffled cry for liberty of a tortured soul that echoes through every page, are so vivid, so intense, and so sincere, that she compels us to accept the children of her brain as of like nature with ourselves. Among women novelists she is, *par excellence*, the painter of moral tempests, rising to situations which escape melodrama, though in eternal conflict with the carping pettiness of convention and the limitations of normal humanity. Her favourite heroines, to outward seeming, are timid women of obvious femininity; but the soul within is heroic after the most romantic fashion. They extract adventure from the commonplace, and master circumstances by strong will, pure imagination, and restless ambition. Charlotte Brontë (in this respect alone obeying the conventions) centres her picture upon love between men and women; but—as rarely in fiction—the passion is convincingly mutual, and it is certainly inspired on either hand by the most unpromising personalities.

The life and character of Charlotte Brontë differ as widely as her work from the accepted literary models. She neither attained the heights of social popularity like Fanny Burney, enjoyed the best intellectual comradeship like George Eliot, nor passed her days in uneventful retirement like Jane Austen. Without being externally adventurous, her personal experience was crowded with emotional storm and stress.

Born on April 21, 1816, at Thornton, Yorkshire, and growing up, from the age of three, among the

still wilder hills of Haworth, she undoubtedly imbibed a certain bleakness of outlook and a marvellous power of stern repression from that wonderful scenery which stirs the deepest emotions of human nature and never leaves the imagination at rest. The spiritual sons and daughters of the moor are ever longing for something yet wider and more lofty than the rugged expanses to which their spirit is attuned, ever inspired by a discontent truly divine.

The Irish blood in her father's veins was no doubt responsible for the romantic elements of her work ; but the setting and the stoic determination underlying the characters are essentially northern.

The Rev. Patrick Brontë, Vicar of Haworth, was early left a widower, and does not seem to have had much hold on practical affairs ; her only brother's character was weak and profligate ; while of her two sisters, Emily, from the untamed nature of her genius, and Anne, from her gentle resignation to suffering, were alike unfitted to battle with the world. Charlotte, despite the vividness of her imaginative existence, emerges from the remarkable family group, the only element of common-sense, almost the only power for earning money. The three sisters were all in all to each other, sharing each other's inmost thoughts and fondest dreams with a freedom from reserve seldom attained even by those united through the closest of human ties. Pain and despair alone were—on occasions—mercifully hidden by one from the rest, and the closing months of Emily's short life were passed in stern silence almost forbidding sympathy.

We have said that Charlotte's best work owed little to observation ; but it should be remembered that the comment applies only to the main emotional crises, the inner workings of character, which give it vitality. Her personal experience, transformed by her genius for introspection and her masterly imagination, provided the colouring and much illustrative material for

all her novels. She was educated at an establishment at Cowan Bridge which is still in existence, and which in her own day no doubt richly deserved the merciless exposure of the earlier chapters in *Jane Eyre*. The *pensionnat* of Madame Heger in Brussels, where, like her own Lucy Snowe, she spent some years as part teacher and part pupil, suggested much in *Villette* that has probably seemed strange and almost incredible to many English readers. The curates of *Shirley* were frankly caricatured from a class of young men naturally familiar to a clergyman's daughter, and we are told that in this case the "originals" took positive pleasure in their own fancy portraits. The minor characters in her books, in fact, are seldom particularly original. "She is never at home save in the heart and centre of her theme, where, in virtue of her vividness and directness, of her power, in spite of language, as it were, rather than by its aid, to communicate the fire and ether of her nature, she reigns by right of conquest, acknowledged queen and mistress."

It was soon after Charlotte's return from Brussels that the three sisters agreed each to write a novel, choosing their subjects and pursuing the work without consultation, only that the results might be frankly and thoroughly compared on conclusion. Charlotte's story, *The Professor*, was finished first, and went its weary round with no more helpful introduction or patronage than the eager good wishes of three young hearts. Several publishers rejected it, until one, more discerning or more kind-hearted than the rest, sent back the manuscript with a few words of judicious encouragement, advising the author to try her hand at writing a three-volume novel. Charlotte apparently never thought herself ill-used. With characteristic good sense she set aside the work on which she had spent so much loving care, evolved an *entirely* new scheme, and produced *Jane Eyre*, which was at once accepted, published in 1847 over the pseudonym "Currer Bell" (already adopted for a small volume of poems issued

the previous year by the three sisters), and took England by storm. The sex of "Currer Bell," unknown even to her publisher, became the prevailing topic of conversation in literary circles. *Shirley*, developed on far more conventional lines, followed two years later, and in 1852 she issued *Villette*, where she returned to the subject and *motif* of *The Professor*, though the story is entirely recast and the situations of the chief characters are reversed. The earlier tale was published after her death, and will always be read with interest. But it does not rank with the other novels, and its rejection was probably of service to literature. She attempted no more; apparently her powers had been exhausted by work and trouble. Emily and Anne both died in youth, and two years after the appearance of *Villette*, Charlotte married a Mr. Nicholls, one of her father's curates— 1855 like Fanny Burney, beginning her own romance A.D. when she had laid aside those of others. But a long rest was not allowed her, and she died on March 31, 1855, in her thirty-ninth year.

It is quite probable that her vein was exhausted, and that, had she lived longer, she would have written no more. The high pressure at which she worked could not be maintained for long periods, and the play of passion on memory by which she was exclusively inspired does not cover a wide field. The few immortal types she has created were full-length portraits, and hard to match. Hewn out of the rocky hillside, aflame with love and hatred, they will ever stir the awakening pulses of each new generation, and stay with us in age—familiar, perhaps a little disturbing, but never forgotten or unloved.

#### RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINE.

(FROM "JANE EYRE.")

I have not yet alluded to the visits of Mr. Brocklehurst, and indeed that gentleman was from home during the greater part of the first month after my arrival—perhaps prolonging his stay with his friend the archdeacon: his absence was a relief to me. I need



not say that I had my own reasons for dreading his coming; but come he did at last.

One afternoon (I had then been three weeks at Lowood), as I was sitting with a slate in my hand, puzzling over a sum in long division, my eyes, raised in abstraction to the window, caught sight of a figure just passing: I recognized almost instinctively that gaunt outline; and when, two minutes after, all the school, teachers included, rose *en masse*, it was not necessary for me to look up in order to ascertain whose entrance they thus greeted. A long stride measured the schoolroom, and presently beside Miss Temple, who herself had risen, stood the same black column which had frowned on me so ominously from the hearthrug of Gateshead. I now glanced sideways at this piece of architecture. Yes, I was right: it was Mr. Brocklehurst, buttoned up in a surtout, and looking longer, narrower, and more rigid than ever.

I had my own reasons for being dismayed at this apparition: too well I remembered the perfidious hints given by Mrs. Reed about my disposition, etc.; the promise pledged by Mr. Brocklehurst to apprise Miss Temple and the teachers of my vicious nature. All along I had been dreading the fulfilment of this promise,—I had been looking out daily for the “Coming Man,” whose information respecting my past life and conversation was to brand me as a bad child for ever: now there he was.

He stood at Miss Temple’s side; he was speaking low in her ear. I did not doubt he was making disclosures of my villainy; and I watched her eye with painful anxiety, expecting every moment to see its dark orb turn on me a glance of repugnance and contempt. I listened too; and as I happened to be seated quite at the top of the room, I caught most of what he said: its import relieved me from immediate apprehension.

“I suppose, Miss Temple, the thread I bought at Lowton will do; it struck me that it would be just of the quality for the calico chemises, and I sorted the needles to match. You may tell Miss Smith that I forgot to make a memorandum of the darning needles, but she shall have some papers sent in next week; and she is not, on any account, to give out more than one at a time to each pupil: if they have more, they are apt to be careless and lose them. And oh, ma’am, I wish the woollen stockings were better looked to! When I was here last, I went into the kitchen-garden and examined the clothes drying on the line; there was a quantity of black hose in a very bad state of repair: from the size of the holes in them I was sure they had not been well mended from time to time.”

He paused.

“Your directions shall be attended to, sir,” said Miss Temple.

“And, ma’am,” he continued, “the laundress tells me some of the girls have two clean tuckers in the week: it is too much; the rules limit them to one.”

“I think I can explain that circumstance, sir. Agnes and Catherine Johnstone were invited to take tea with some friends at Lowton last Thursday, and I gave them leave to put on clean tuckers for the occasion.”

Mr. Brocklehurst nodded.

“Well, for once it may pass; but please not to let the circumstance occur too often. And there is another thing which surprised

me : I find, in settling accounts with the housekeeper, that a lunch, consisting of bread and cheese, has twice been served out to the girls during the past fortnight. How is this ? I looked over the regulations, and I find no such meal as lunch mentioned. Who introduced this innovation ? and by what authority ? ”

“ I must be responsible for the circumstance, sir,” replied Miss Temple : “ the breakfast was so ill prepared that the pupils could not possibly eat it ; and I dared not allow them to remain fasting till dinner-time.”

“ Madam, allow me an instant. You are aware that my plan in bringing up these girls is, not to accustom them to habits of luxury and indulgence, but to render them hardy, patient, self-denying. Should any little accidental disappointment of the appetite occur, such as the spoiling of a meal, the under or the over dressing of a dish, the incident ought not to be neutralized by replacing with something more delicate the comfort lost, thus pampering the body and obviating the aim of this institution ; it ought to be improved to the spiritual edification of the pupils, by encouraging them to evince fortitude under the temporary privation. A brief address on those occasions would not be mistimed, wherein a judicious instructor would take the opportunity of referring to the sufferings of the primitive Christians ; to the torments of martyrs ; to the exhortations of our blessed Lord Himself, cailing upon His disciples to take up their cross and follow Him ; to His warnings that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God ; to His divine consolations, ‘ If ye suffer hunger or thirst for My sake, happy are ye.’ Oh, madam, when you put bread and cheese, instead of burnt porridge, into these children’s mouths, you may indeed feed their vile bodies, but you little think how you starve their immortal souls ! ”

Mr. Brocklehurst again paused—perhaps overcome by his feelings. Miss Temple had looked down when he first began to speak to her ; but she now gazed straight before her, and her face, naturally pale as marble, appeared to be assuming also the coldness and fixity of that material—especially her mouth, closed as if it would have required a sculptor’s chisel to open it, and her brow settled gradually into petrified severity.

Meantime, Mr. Brocklehurst, standing on the hearth with his hands behind his back, majestically surveyed the whole school. Suddenly his eye gave a blink as if it had met something that either dazzled or shocked its pupil ; turning, he said in more rapid accents than he had hitherto used,—

“ Miss Temple, Miss Temple, what—*what* is that girl with curled hair ?—red hair, ma’am, curled—curled all over ? ” And extending his cane he pointed to the awful object, his hand shaking as he did so.

“ It is Julia Severn,” replied Miss Temple, very quietly.

“ Julia Severn, ma’am ! And why has she, or any other, curled hair ? Why, in defiance of every precept and principle of this house, does she conform to the world so openly—here in an evangelical, charitable establishment—as to wear her hair one mass of curls ? ”

“ Julia’s hair curls naturally,” returned Miss Temple, still more quietly.

“ Naturally ! Yes, but we are not to conform to nature ; I wish

these girls to be the children of Grace : and why that abundance ? I have again and again intimated that I desire the hair to be arranged closely, modestly, plainly. Miss Temple, that girl's hair must be cut off entirely ; I will send a barber to-morrow : and I see others who have far too much of the excrescence—that tall girl, tell her to turn round. Tell all the first form to rise up and direct their faces to the wall.”

Miss Temple passed her handkerchief over her lips, as if to smooth away the involuntary smile that curled them ; she gave the order, however, and when the first class could take in what was required of them, they obeyed. Leaning a little back on my bench, I could see the looks and grimaces with which they commented on this manoeuvre. It was a pity Mr. Brocklehurst could not see them too ; he would perhaps have felt that, whatever he might do with the outside of the cup and platter, the inside was further beyond his interference than he imagined.

He scrutinized the reverse of these living medals some five minutes, then pronounced sentence. These words fell like the knell of doom,—

“All those top-knots must be cut off.”

Miss Temple seemed to remonstrate.

“Madam,” he pursued, “I have a Master to serve whose kingdom is not of this world : my mission is to mortify in these girls the lusts of the flesh ; to teach them to clothe themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with braided hair and costly apparel ; and each of the young persons before us has a string of hair twisted in plaits which vanity itself might have woven ; these, I repeat, must be cut off : think of the time wasted, of——”

Mr. Brocklehurst was here interrupted : three other visitors, ladies, now entered the room. They ought to have come a little sooner to have heard his lecture on dress, for they were splendidly attired in velvet, silk, and furs. The two younger of the trio (fine girls of sixteen and seventeen) had gray beaver hats, then in fashion, shaded with ostrich plumes, and from under the brim of this graceful head-dress fell a profusion of light tresses, elaborately curled ; the elder lady was enveloped in a costly velvet shawl, trimmed with ermine, and she wore a false front of French curls.

These ladies were deferentially received by Miss Temple, as Mrs. and the Misses Brocklehurst, and conducted to seats of honour at the top of the room. It seems they had come in the carriage with their reverend relative, and had been conducting a rummaging scrutiny of the rooms upstairs, while he transacted business with the housekeeper, questioned the laundress, and lectured the superintendent. They now proceeded to address divers remarks and reproofs to Miss Smith, who was charged with the care of the linen and the inspection of the dormitories : but I had no time to listen to what they said ; other matters called off and enchained my attention.

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## CHAPTER III.

THOMAS BABINGTON, LORD MACAULAY.

Born 1800 A.D . . . . . Died 1859 A.D.

DISTINGUISHED as a descriptive poet by his fine *Lays of Ancient Rome*, and yet more distinguished as a master of English prose by his *Essays* and his noble *History of England*, Macaulay stands prominent among the highest literary names of the nineteenth century. When, amid the Christmas festivities of 1859, a mournful whisper crept into almost every home in the land, telling of his death, there were few hearts so thoroughly engrossed by the pleasures of the passing hour as not to send a thought of affectionate sorrow into that quiet room at Kensington, where the great historian and essayist—the first man whom England ever made a peer for the power of his pen—lay mute and still among his cherished books and the half-written sheets of his unfinished volume.

Macaulay was of Scottish lineage, being a descendant of the Macaulays of Row, Dumbartonshire. His grandfather, John, was a Presbyterian minister. His father, Zachary, who spent part of his life in Jamaica, became well known for his exertions in opposition to the hateful slave-trade. At Rothley Temple, in Leicestershire, the seat of Zachary's brother-in-law, a rich English merchant and member of Parliament, the future historian was born in 1800, and was named Thomas Babington, after the uncle in whose house he first saw the light.

Young Macaulay's career as a student of Trinity College, Cambridge, was crowned with high honours. Entering in 1818, he obtained in the following year the Chancellor's medal for a poem called *Pompeii*; in 1821 he received a similar distinction for a poem on *Evening*, and was, besides, elected to the Craven scholarship; and he had been for a year Fellow of

Trinity, when, in 1825, he took his degree of Master of Arts. And in the arena of the Union Debating Society, where the keenest and brightest minds of Cambridge met to display their skill in fence, few could measure weapons with Babington Macaulay. Such honours formed no unfitting prelude for the career of literary and political renown upon which he entered without delay. While yet an undergraduate, he had, in company with Praed, the author of *Quince* and the *Red Fisherman*, written for *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*. Here his first public laurels were won. But the young student of law—he was now working away at Lincoln's Inn in preparation for his call to the Bar—before donning the legal robe, had achieved a success of which many older men might well be proud. Milton's newly-found treatise on *Christian Doctrine* having been rendered into English, Macaulay contributed to an August number of *The Edinburgh Review* that article on Milton which must be regarded as the starting-point of his literary fame. It

1825 was brilliant even to excess. The writer him-  
 A.D. self, when the added skill and taste of nearly  
 twenty years had chastened his style, condemned this article, as being "overloaded with gaudy and ungraceful ornament." But its appearance was felt by all the reading public to mark the rising of a new star of uncommon lustre above the horizon; and it is easier to forgive an excess of real brilliance, which we know coming years must purify and subdue, than to endure a poverty of light, or, still worse, that display of pinchbeck jewels, glittering with affected lustre, of which our young literature is too full.

About six months after the appearance of *Milton* the writer was called to the English Bar. We pass lightly over his professional and political career. His Whig friends soon made him a Commissioner of Bankruptcy. He took his seat in 1830 as member for Calne. He spoke often and with great power in the battle of the Reform Bill, and won considerable

reputation as an orator, although his delivery was monotonous, and he lacked some of the *physical* qualities of a telling speaker. His orations were rather brilliant political essays than great outbursts of natural eloquence, like the speeches of Chatham or Burke. From 1832 to 1834 he was member for Leeds. And then he went out to India as legal adviser to the Supreme Council of India, his principal business there being the preparation of a new penal code of Indian law. The formation of this code led him to the investigation of Indian history, a study which bore fine fruit in his essays on *Lord Clive* and *Warren Hastings*, the principal literary results of the four years which he spent in the East. Many of his best articles in the *Edinburgh* came home by the Indian mail, recreations of his leisure at Calcutta. In 1839, Macaulay, then newly returned from India, became member for Edinburgh upon taking office under Lord Melbourne as Secretary for War, and this connection with the Scottish capital lasted for eight years. Under Lord John Russell, he was in 1846 appointed Paymaster-General of the Forces; but in the following year his vote in favour of the Maynooth grant having given offence to some of the Edinburgh electors, he was beaten at the poll.

The defeat was a victory. Macaulay the member for Edinburgh, sinking out of public view for two years, emerges as Macaulay the historian of England. Living chiefly at the Albany, and spending many of his mornings among the literary treasures of the British Museum, quartering himself for weeks at a country alehouse in the village of Weston Zoyland, that he might write his stirring and vivid description of the battle of Sedgemoor on the very spot, he devoted all his strength to more enduring work than essays in *The Edinburgh Review*. The first two volumes of *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second*, published in 1848, were received with an



enthusiasm fully equal to the reception of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*. The plan was a great one. "I

purpose to write the history of England from  
 1848 the accession of King James the Second down  
 A.D. to a time which is within the memory of men  
 still living," are the opening words of the opening chapter. He has brought the work down only to the death of William the Third, and that with gaps in the concluding and imperfect volume. We cannot say that a history from the time of James the Second down to the battle of Waterloo or the death of blind old King George, written by so great a pen within the compass of half a dozen volumes, would have been a book of little interest to the general reader, for we know what brilliant summaries of historical periods, all glowing with colour and filled with life, the essayist has given us; but a summarized history would greatly lack the charm with which the volumes of Macaulay enchain us, as we pass in review the panorama of court and camp and council-room and country house unfolded to our delighted gaze. To condense the Rebellion of Monmouth, the Trial of the Bishops, the Siege of Derry, the Battle of the Boyne, or the Massacre of Glencoe into fewer pages would be to squeeze out most of the splendid colouring that reminds us of Titian or Tintoretto, and scatter to the winds those little traits of personal appearance and individual action—those glimpses of weather, scenery, costume, and domestic life—which make authentic history read, in his pictured pages, like a tale of romance. One of Macaulay's favourite maxims—how greatly in description the particular excels the general—is finely exemplified by all his writings. The third and fourth volumes of the history were published in 1855. Cart-loads of copies left the publisher's wareroom, and the presses could hardly work quickly enough to keep pace with the demand. The last volume, published two years after the historian's death, is formed of such manuscripts as were

found among his papers, partly revised, partly in original roughness (which, however, surpasses the elaborate smoothness of most other men). The death-bed of Dutch William is the last scene described ; but the narrative of the fifth volume is not continuous, it having been thought better to leave the fragments as the artist's hand had left them than to link these fragments together with pieces of inferior workmanship.

The first chapter of this noble work contains a rapid but masterly view of earlier English history, becoming more detailed and picturesque as that period of which Cromwell is the central figure widens on the historian's view. The second chapter depicts the shameful reign of the second Charles. The third—among all, most characteristic of Macaulay's historical treatment—shows us the cabbages and gooseberry bushes growing close to the country squire's hall door in 1685 ; leads us through the shrub-wood, with here and there a woodcock, which covered the site of now brilliant, busy Regent Street ; introduces us to the literary gossips at Will's Coffee-house, and the grave surgeons who clustered round Garraway's tables ; carries us in a flying coach at the wonderful rate of forty miles a day along roads thick with quagmires and infested with highwaymen ; brings us even into the crowded jails, festering with dirt, disease, and crime—gives us, in short, such a picture of old England in the days of the Stuarts as no writer had ever given us before. From novels, plays, pictures, maps, poems, diaries, letters, and a hundred other such sources, with patient industry he collected his materials for this remarkable view of English life. Then, after an overture so magnificent, the brilliant drama, on which the black curtain fell sadly soon, opens with the death of King Charles the Second.

The slight put upon Macaulay by the electors of Edinburgh was somewhat atoned for in 1852, when they again returned him as their member, although he

issued no address and stooped to solicit no vote. For four years he continued to represent that city in Parliament; but his day of public life was nearly over—he was fast breaking down. Resigning his seat in 1856, he entered the Upper House in the following year as Baron Macaulay of Rothley Temple, 1859 having received his peerage chiefly as a fitting A.D. tribute to his eminent literary merit. He wore the coronet little more than two years, dying on December 28, 1859.

We have spoken of Macaulay's prose. The little poetry he has left us affords almost equal delight, and is equally worthy of close and careful study. Having tried his youthful pen in the composition of stirring ballads from English and French history, such as *The Armada* and the *Battle of Ivry*, on his return from India he resumed this style in his noble *Lays of Ancient Rome*, which were published in 1842. The four lays—*Horatius Cocles*, *The Battle of Lake Regillus*, *Virginius*, and *The Prophecy of Capys*—are imaginative reproductions, in the English ballad style and measure, of those old songs which Niebuhr believed to have formed the early history of Rome. For marvellous power over the picturesque—a single line, sometimes even a single *word*, suggesting a landscape or a group—these lays have never been surpassed by any poems of their kind. The free swing of the melody, streaming on in a rush of Saxon words, such as alone can trace vivid pictures on an English page, has a mingling of warlike fire, thoroughly in keeping with the character of the plain, hardy, bronze-cheeked, iron-limbed plebeians of the early Republic, who are supposed to listen to, and be kindled by, the song.

#### THE BURIAL-PLACE OF MONMOUTH.

In the meantime many handkerchiefs were dipped in the Duke's blood; for by a large part of the multitude he was regarded as a martyr, who had died for the Protestant religion. The head and body were placed in a coffin covered with black velvet, and were laid privately under the communion-table of Saint Peter's Chapel in the Tower.

Within four years the pavement of the chancel was again disturbed ; and hard by the remains of Monmouth were laid the remains of Jeffreys. In truth, there is no sadder spot on the earth than that little cemetery. Death is there associated not, as in Westminster Abbey and Saint Paul's, with genius and virtue, with public veneration and imperishable renown ; not, as in our humblest churches and churchyards, with everything that is most endearing in social and domestic charities ; but with whatever is darkest in human nature and in human destiny,—with the savage triumph of implacable enemies,—with the inconstancy, the ingratitude, the cowardice of friends,—with all the miseries of fallen greatness and of blighted fame. Thither have been carried, through successive ages, by the rude hands of gaolers, without one mourner following, the bleeding relics of men who had been the captains of armies, the leaders of parties, the oracles of senates, and the ornaments of courts. Thither was borne, before the window where Jane Grey was praying, the mangled corpse of Guilford Dudley. Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset and Protector of the realm, reposes there by the brother whom he murdered. There has mouldered away the headless trunk of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester and Cardinal of Saint Vitalis, a man worthy to have lived in a better age, and to have died in a better cause. There are laid John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, Lord High Admiral ; and Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, Lord High Treasurer. There, too, is another Essex, on whom nature and fortune had lavished all their bounties in vain, and whom valour, grace, genius, royal favour, popular applause, conducted to an early and ignominious doom. Not far off sleep two chiefs of the great house of Howard, Thomas, fourth Duke of Norfolk, and Philip, eleventh Earl of Arundel. Here and there, among the thick graves of unquiet and aspiring statesmen, lie more delicate sufferers ; Margaret of Salisbury, the last of the proud name of Plantagenet, and those two fair Queens who perished by the jealous rage of Henry. Such was the dust with which the dust of Monmouth mingled.

#### A JACOBITE'S EPITAPH.

To my true king I offer'd free from stain  
 Courage and faith ; vain faith, and courage vain.  
 For him I threw lands, honours, wealth, away,  
 And one dear hope, that was more prized than they.  
 For him I languish'd in a foreign clime,  
 Grey-hair'd with sorrow in my manhood's prime ;  
 Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,  
 And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees ;  
 Beheld each night my home in fever'd sleep,  
 Each morning started from the dream to weep ;  
 Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave  
 The resting-place I ask'd, an early grave.  
 O thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone,  
 From that proud country which was once mine own,  
 By those white cliffs I never more must see,  
 By that dear language which I spake like thee,  
 Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear  
 O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

## CHAPTER IV.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

Born 1806 A.D. . . . . Died 1861 A.D.

ALTHOUGH now somewhat overshadowed by the greater fame of the poet originally known to the world as "Mrs. Browning's husband," the authoress of the *Sonnets from the Portuguese* will always be regarded as no unworthy member of the great group of writers who stirred the early decades of the nineteenth century. She is probably the greatest English poetess; her work was singularly independent; and only our present day impatience of sentimentality has temporarily diminished her high repute.

Her father was Mr. Edward Barrett Moulton, who, while Elizabeth was yet a child, inherited an estate from his mother's father and adopted her name, so that the poetess was practically always known as Miss Barrett. She was born at Coxhoe Hall, Durham, on March 6, 1806, but passed her childhood at Hope End, near Ledbury, in Herefordshire, where her father had built a romantic country house with Moorish turrets and windows, overlooking a large and beautiful park. It was indeed fortunate for the imaginative and precocious child, who is said to have read Homer in the original at the age of ten, that she grew up in the spacious and natural habits of country life. She loved to work among her flowers, and rode a pony with spirit. On the other hand, to her Greek poetry meant dreams of fairyland; and while the precious volume occupied one hand, the other was generally nursing a doll. It does not appear, in fact, that she was unduly solemn or self-conscious as a child; and even her father's injudicious publication of the epic *Battle of Marathon*, in four books, written in her fourteenth year, failed to spoil her natural simplicity.

But a youth of so much promise received an early check from causes entirely external, which cast their shadow over nearly all the remainder of her life. It was her energy in attempting to saddle her own pony which permanently injured her spine, prevented any indulgence in active exercise after she was fifteen, and practically imprisoned her to an invalid's couch for many years.

Her mother died when she was twenty-two, and the subsequent removal from Hope End was a sore trial to the sensitive, home-loving girl. She was now taken to one or two health resorts, from which she derived little benefit; and a visit to Torquay was further clouded by the death of a favourite brother from drowning.

Mr. Barrett and his daughter finally settled in Gloucester Place, London, where the invalid was kept, no doubt with the best intentions, in a seclusion which the knowledge of subsequent events now tempts one to condemn. She found consolation, however, in the exercise of her pen, and in the frequent visits of a few constant friends, particularly Miss Mitford, authoress of *Our Village*, and her own cousin, John Kenyon.

It was the latter who subsequently changed the whole course of her life by bringing a new visitor to Gloucester Place, in the person of Robert Browning, a poet then known to only a few readers, whose *Bells and Pomegranates* had already, as it happened, won a fine tribute from Elizabeth Barrett in her *Lady Geraldine's Courtship*.

She was now (1846) in her forty-first year; 1846 but the contact of kindred souls proved mag- A.D.  
netic. Browning soon learned to love the gentle poetess, and quickly secured her unquestioning surrender. Mr. Barrett seems to have been possessed by an unreasoningly jealous affection, dangerously akin to tyranny; and permitted himself to deprecate, with all the authority of an old-fashioned parent, any form of excitement or strong feeling for his daughter. He would



not listen to the idea of her becoming engaged or thinking of marriage, though apparently raising no personal objections to this particular suitor.

But Browning was not the man to be intimidated or easily diverted from his own convictions. He was determined to win his bride; and he believed, as it appears rightly, that her health would actually benefit by an experience of the deepest happiness and by a more varied and fuller course of life. Accordingly a secret engagement was entered into, and they were privately married on September 12, 1846, in Marylebone Church, London.

Mrs. Browning having been ordered by her physician to winter abroad, the newly-married couple crossed at once to the Continent, and made their home in Florence. Here the poets found many friends, and led a life of comparative activity, writing, entertaining, visiting, and absorbing the natural beauties of the country with the ardour of a youth which she at least had long supposed herself to have missed for ever. The marriage proved ideal; Mrs. Browning's immortal *Sonnets* are "the noblest anthology for noble lovers which any literature has to show." A few of her husband's passionate verses go far towards establishing their personal inspiration; and the *Letters*, almost too intimate for publication, complete the matchless record.

Mrs. Browning, in fact, had been enabled to *live*, but she had not the strength to live long. Disease was banished, but not conquered. For close upon fifteen years she enjoyed intense happiness and renewed power for work, and then she grew "tired of earth's life." The shock of Cavour's death is  
 1861 said to have hastened the end; and on June 30,  
 A.D. 1861, in her fifty-sixth year, she entered  
 "heaven's sweet life."

Mrs. Browning undoubtedly was a poet by instinct. That is to say, verse was always for her the natural expression of emotion or thought. Her work reflects

herself. Such obvious spontaneity made her sincere and vigorous ; but it also, unfortunately, encouraged a certain faultiness in technique—heresies of rhyme, fantastic epithets, and vague phrasing—which spoils so many of the poems. It may be questioned whether any writer so distinguished has been so careless. Poetical forms, in fact, came too easily into her mind. She was dangerously fluent.

But a finer artistic sense might have produced artificiality. Her lyrics have all the rapture and the abandon of a nature-song tuned to unearthly melodies ; her ballads are pictorial and stirring ; and the individuality of the poet throughout is clear, winning, and irresistible. She is never affected, and, despite the prevalent pensive sadness of her special tone, always appeals to the great heart of humanity. *The Cry of the Children*, *Bertha in the Lane*, and *The Romance of the Swan's Nest* will never lose their popularity. *Aurora Leigh*, though provokingly unequal, is crowded with imaginative thought and brilliant characterization ; and in the *Sonnets from the Portuguese* the art for once is as victorious as the inspiration.

#### THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN.

Do you hear the children weeping, O my brothers,  
 Ere the sorrow comes with years ?  
 They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,  
 And *that* cannot stop their tears.  
 The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,  
 The young birds are chirping in the nest,  
 The young fawns are playing with the shadows,  
 The young flowers are blowing toward the west—  
 But the young, young children, O my brothers,  
 They are weeping bitterly !  
 They are weeping in the playtime of the others,  
 In the country of the free.

\* \* \* \* \*

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,  
 And their looks are sad to see,  
 For the man's hoary anguish draws and presses  
 Down the cheeks of infancy ;  
 " Your old earth," they say, " is very dreary,  
 Our young feet," they say, " are very weak ;  
 Few paces have we taken, yet are weary—  
 Our grave-rest is very far to seek :

Ask the aged why they weep, and not the children,  
 For the outside earth is cold,  
 And we young ones stand without, in our bewildering,  
 And the graves are for the old."

\* \* \* \* \*

"For oh," say the children, "we are weary,  
 And we cannot run or leap;  
 If we cared for any meadows, it were merely  
 To drop down in them and sleep.  
 Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,  
 We fall upon our faces, trying to go;  
 And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping,  
 The reddest flower would look as pale as snow.  
 For, all day, we drag our burden tiring  
 Through the coal-dark, underground;  
 Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron  
 In the factories, round and round."

\* \* \* \* \*

Now tell the poor young children, O my brothers,  
 To look up to Him and pray;  
 So the blessed One who blesteth all the others,  
 Will bless them another day.  
 They answer, "Who is God that He should hear us,  
 While the rushing of the iron wheels is stirred?  
 When we sob aloud, the human creatures near us  
 Pass by, hearing not, or answer not a word.  
 And *we* hear not (for the wheels in their resounding)  
 Strangers speaking at the door:  
 Is it likely God, with angels singing round Him,  
 Hears our weeping any more?"

\* \* \* \* \*

And well may the children weep before you!  
 They are weary ere they run;  
 They have never seen the sunshine, nor the glory  
 Which is brighter than the sun.  
 They know the grief of man, without its wisdom;  
 They sink in man's despair without its calm;  
 Are slaves without the liberty in Christdom,  
 Are martyrs, by the pang without the palm:  
 Are worn as if with age, yet unretrievably  
 The harvest of its memories cannot reap,—  
 Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly,  
 Let them weep! let them weep!

## CHAPTER V.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

Born 1811 A.D. . . . . Died 1863 A.D.

THE author of *Vanity Fair* was born in 1811 at Calcutta. His father, descended from a good old Yorkshire family, held office in the Civil Service of the East India Company. The novelist was yet a very little child when that separation from his parents, which is the bitterest penalty attached to Indian life, took place. His own words give us a glimpse of the voyage to England. "Our ship touched at an island on the way home, where my black servant took me a walk over rocks and hills till we passed a garden where we saw a man walking. 'That is Bonaparte,' said the black; 'he eats three sheep a day and all the young children he could catch.'" We can well imagine little fingers tightening round the dark hand that held them, as the pair hurried back to the ship, and looks of terror glancing from the little white face back to the trees where this ogre lived.

The old Charterhouse school, lovingly painted in more than one of his works, was the place of his education; and his name is the latest of those household words which that quiet cloister has given to the literature of England. After some time at Cambridge, where he did not stay to take a degree, he entered life, the heir to a fortune of many thousand pounds, resolved to devote himself to the easel and the brush. His studies in the art galleries of Rome and some of the German cities, particularly Weimar, prepared him, unconsciously to himself, for that other painting—in pen and ink—to which his life was afterwards devoted.

The loss of a large part of his fortune made it necessary that he should be more than an amateur student of art. He entered at the Middle Temple, and began his literary career in the pages of *Fraser's*

*Magazine*. Month by month there appeared tales and sketches by Michael Angelo Titmarsh and George Fitz-Boodle, Esquire, which, although slow in attracting general attention, caught the eye of such men as John Sterling, who saw in them the evidence of great talent in the bud. *The Great Hoggarty Diamond*, *The Paris Sketch Book*, *The Chronicle of the Drum*, and *The Irish Sketch Book* were among the first works of this artist-author's pencil. *Barry Lyndon*, the story of an Irish fortune-hunter, also appeared in *Fraser*.

The columns of *Punch* were next enlivened by Thackeray's sketches; and no papers, in the formidable array of wit and fun which for sixty years has been growing into volumes under the striped jacket of that distinguished criminal, have ever surpassed *Jeames's Diary*, or *The Snob Papers*. The former, inimitably rich in its spelling—which, whether the writer meant it or not, most delightfully exposes the absurdities of the phonetic system—contains the history of a London flunkey, elevated to sudden wealth by speculation in railway shares. The latter, with a touch of light and seemingly careless banter, twitches the cloak from Humbug and Hypocrisy, especially as these wretched things are found in London clubs and drawing-rooms, and discloses them in all their ridiculous meanness to the scorn of honest men.

Then appeared Thackeray's first, and, in the eyes of many, his greatest novel, *Vanity Fair*. Running its course in serial numbers, it rapidly became a favourite. It was utterly unlike the fiction already on English tables. A very clever and thoroughly unprincipled governess, Becky Sharp, pushing  
 1847 and scheming her way into fashionable life,  
 A.D. is certainly the heroine of the book. She personifies intellect without virtue. Opposed to her is the sweet, amiable, pretty, but somewhat silly Amelia Sedley, who represents virtue without intellect. Pictures of Continental life mingle with London scenes; and especially we have a sketch of Brussels in those

terrible days when Waterloo thunder was in the air. Prominent among the portraiture of men in *Vanity Fair* are the fat Indian official, Jos. Sedley, whose delicate health does not interfere with the play of his knife and fork; the big, hulking dragoon, Rawdon Crawley, whose heart, for all his nonsense, is in the right place; the empty dandy George, upon whom little Amelia wastes her sweetness; and the unselfish and devoted William Dobbin, a kind of Tom Pinch in regimentals.

*The History of Arthur Pendennis*, the second great work from Thackeray's pen, followed in a short time. In the character of Pendennis the novelist depicts a man full of faults and weaknesses, who is acted on by the common influences of modern life.

Mrs. Pendennis, the hero's mother, and Laura, 1848 who, although too good for Arthur, finally A.D. becomes his wife, are the chief feminine portraits. The major, a worldly old beau, and that fine fellow, George Warrington, a literary man, who acts as the good genius of Pen, are capitally drawn.

Six brilliant and appreciative *Lectures on the English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century*, dealing, among others, with Swift, Pope, Addison, Steele, Hogarth, and Goldsmith, delighted a fashionable London crowd at Willis's Rooms in 1851, and were afterwards delivered by the author both in Scotland and America, and published in book form.

Many of the literary men whose books and manners Thackeray discussed in the delightful gossip of these *Lectures* mingle in the mimic life of his next work, *The History of Henry Esmond, Esq.* The days of Blenheim and Ramillies are revived. Swift, Congreve, Addison, and Steele walk once more among men. Jacobites are plotting for the return of 1852 those exiled princes who live across the water. A.D. Queen Anne is on the English throne. As a work of literary art, *Esmond* stands perhaps higher than either *Vanity Fair* or *The Newcomes*. It is



undoubtedly the most perfect historical novel in the language. The hero, who has long sought Beatrix Castlewood, a self-willed beauty, consoles himself for rejection by a union with her mother, and settles down in Virginia to write the story of his life. The novelist had a difficult task to accomplish in reconciling his readers to a plot so uncommon; but any slight revulsion of feeling which we experience at the change is amply atoned for by the eloquence of the book and its truthfulness to history.

*The Newcomes, Memoirs of a Most Respectable Family*, edited by Arthur Pendennis, Esquire, appeared in monthly numbers, which completed their tale in 1855. The story is one of modern life. And in all the range of fiction nothing goes deeper to the heart than the affecting spectacle of that true gentleman, 1855 and gentlest man, old Colonel Newcome, lying, A.D. after a life of virtue and devotion, on a poor death-bed within the gloom of the old Charter-house. Amid a crowd of new and striking characters, we find here a lovely picture of womanhood in Ethel Newcome.

The success of the *English Humourists* induced the lecturer to try his pen a second time in this attractive field. Continuing those light and graceful sketches of later English history which form the groundwork of *Esmond*, he produced a series of lectures on *The Four Georges*, which he delivered first in the States, then in London, and afterwards in several leading cities of Great Britain. The darker side of the Germanized English Court is here depicted. He tells with great pathos the domestic tragedy of poor old "Farmer George," third of the name, closing the sorrowful story with a passage in his own peculiar vein, full of mournful beauty and deep feeling. But the son of that blind, insane, deaf old king is treated with such contemptuous sarcasm, such fine-pointed, piercing irony, as a Thackeray alone can use. All the poor paints and feathers in which this royal character is

tricked out in contemporary books and records of his reign shrivel and drop under the acid ; and the man, poor and miserable and naked, stands disclosed to view.

*The Virginians*, a continuation of *Esmond*, founded, like that work, on a historical basis, began to appear towards the close of 1857. The story embraces pictures of life in England during the reign of 1857 George the Second, and places before us the A.D. literary men and wits who thronged the coffee-houses of that time. The American War forms a part of the historical groundwork of the plot.

In the year 1860, *The Cornhill Magazine* was started, with Thackeray as its editor. If his position had been a doubtful one, the splendid success of that serial would at once have dissolved all doubts. The circulation of the second number exceeded one hundred thousand ; nor was this sudden leap over the heads of all other serials of the day a mere spasmodic effort—the sudden soaring of a blazing rocket which comes down a blackened stick. The position quickly won was steadily maintained. In addition to his editorial duties, Thackeray contributed largely to the pages of his magazine. A short story, called *Lovel the Widower*, rather confused in its plot, and somewhat unpleasant in its heroine, yet bearing witness to the undiminished brilliance of his pen ; a novel entitled *The Adventures of Philip*, which ranks among his finest picturing of life and character ; and those queer, delightful, rambling, thoroughly Thackerayesque *Roundabout Papers*, which many abuse but all delight in—frolics of Genius “gliding at his own sweet will” through all wildernesses of topics, past and present—were his chief works after he undertook the literary management of the *Cornhill*. This eminent novelist died suddenly in his bedroom in London on the Christmas Eve of 1863.

Thackeray had his full share of abuse ; but he lived, or rather wrote, it down. “He sees no good in man,” cried one. “Cold, sneering cynic,” says another. “*Vanitas Vanitatum*, and never another theme.”

Cries like these, which have all but died away, were evoked by the author's earlier works, in which he devoted his pen rather to the humiliation of empty pride and the destruction of those *shams* which flourish thickly in the atmosphere of London fashion, than to the direct inculcation of virtue by the creation of virtuous models. His genius resembles some tart and sparkling wine, which has ripened with age into a mellow cordial—golden, sweet, and strong. His later works, though somewhat less pungent, possess a deeper human wisdom and a sunnier glow of benevolence.

His language is fresh and idiomatic English, abounding in the better coinage from the mint of *slang*, though never descending to its baser metals. Words that would have shocked Dr. Johnson, and which still startle gentlemen of the old school by their direct expressiveness, rise to his pen continually. And he talks to his readers out of the pleasant page he gives them with a playful, genial artlessness, which not unfrequently changes to a sudden shower of sharp, satiric hits. That which especially distinguishes his works among the crowd of English novels that load our shelves and tables lies in his portrayal of human character *as it is*. Painting men and women as he meets them at dinner or watches them in the park, he gives us no paragons of perfection—forms of exquisite beauty enshrining minds of unsullied purity, or that opposite ideal so familiar to the readers of romance—but men and women, with all their faults and foibles, with their modest virtues shrinking from exhibition, or their meanness well deserving the censor's lash. Illustrations by himself adorn all his larger works, displaying the same tendency to teach by apparent fun-making, and the same dislike of the conventional which pervade the letterpress. No stranger pencil could so well convey the spirit of that delicate irony and sparkling banter which flow freely from Thackeray's pen.

Thackeray also wrote many charming ballads. His



THOMAS CARLYLE.

*From the unfinished portrait by Millais, in the  
National Portrait Gallery, London.*



rhymes were often (sometimes deliberately) appalling, his metre not always perfect; but the fine martial *Chronicle of the Drum*, the charming *Peg of Limavaddy*, the quaint *Lyra Hybernica*, and the pathetic *Mahogany Tree* and *Bouillabaisse* give him a place among the 'lighter' poets. His novels have thrown his poetry into shadow; but as time passes his ballads will be more widely read, and his reputation as a writer of verse will be considerably enhanced.

## DEATH OF GEORGE THE THIRD.

(FROM "THE FOUR GEORGES.")

All the world knows the story of his malady: all history presents no sadder figure than that of the old man, blind and deprived of reason, wandering through the rooms of his palace, addressing imaginary parliaments, reviewing fancied troops, holding ghostly courts. I have seen his picture as it was taken at this time, hanging in the apartment of his daughter, the Landgravine of Hesse Hombourg, amidst books and Windsor furniture, and a hundred fond reminiscences of her English home. The poor old father is represented in a purple gown, his snowy beard falling over his breast, the star of his famous Order still idly shining on it. He was not only sightless—he became utterly deaf. All light, all reason, all sound of human voices, all the pleasures of this world of God, were taken from him. Some slight lucid moments he had; in one of which the queen, desiring to see him, entered the room, and found him singing a hymn, and accompanying himself at the harpsichord. When he had finished, he knelt down and prayed aloud for her, and then for his family, and then for the nation, concluding with a prayer for himself, that it might please God to avert his heavy calamity from him, but if not, to give him resignation to submit. He then burst into tears, and his reason again fled.

What preacher need moralize on this story; what words save the simplest are requisite to tell it? It is too terrible for tears. The thought of such a misery smites me down in submission before the Ruler of kings and men, the Monarch Supreme over empires and republics, the inscrutable Dispenser of life, death, happiness, victory. "O brothers," I said to those who heard me first in America—"O brothers! speaking the same dear mother tongue—O comrades! enemies no more, let us take a mournful hand together as we stand by this royal corpse, and call a truce to battle! Low he lies to whom the proudest used to kneel once, and who was cast lower than the poorest; dead, whom millions prayed for in vain. Driven off his throne; buffeted by rude hands; with his children in revolt; the darling of his old age killed before him untimely; our Lear hangs over her breathless lips and cries, 'Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little!'

'Vex not his ghost—oh! let him pass; he hates him  
That would upon the rack of this tough world  
Stretch him out longer!'



Hush, Strife and Quarrel, over the solemn grave ! Sound, Trumpets, a mournful march. Fall, Dark Curtain, upon his pageant, his pride, his grief, his awful tragedy ! ”

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### A LUCKY YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

(FROM “PENDENNIS.”)

Arthur's own allowances were liberal all this time ; indeed, much more so than those of the sons of far more wealthy men. Years before, the thrifty and affectionate John Pendennis, whose darling project it had ever been to give his son a university education, and those advantages of which his own father's extravagance had deprived him, had begun laying by a store of money which he called Arthur's Education Fund. Year after year in his book his executors found entries of sums invested as A.E.F., and during the period subsequent to her husband's decease, and before Pen's entry at college, the widow had added sundry sums to this fund, so that when Arthur went up to Oxbridge it reached no inconsiderable amount. Let him be liberally allowed, was Major Pendennis's maxim. Let him make his first *entrée* into the world as a gentleman, and take his place with men of good rank and station ; after giving it him, it will be his own duty to hold it. There is no such bad policy as stinting a boy—or putting him on a lower allowance than his fellows. Arthur will have to face the world and fight for himself presently. Meanwhile we shall have procured for him good friends, gentlemanly habits, and have him well backed and well trained against the time when the real struggle comes. And these liberal opinions the Major probably advanced, both because they were just, and, because he was not dealing with his own money.

Thus young Pen, the only son of an estated country gentleman, with a good allowance, and a gentlemanlike bearing and person, looked to be a lad of much more consequence than he was really ; and was held by the Oxbridge authorities, tradesmen, and undergraduates, as quite a young buck and member of the aristocracy. His manner was frank, brave, and perhaps a little impertinent, as becomes a high-spirited youth. He was perfectly generous and free-handed with his money, which seemed pretty plentiful. He loved joviality, and had a good voice for a song. Boat-racing had not risen in Pen's time to the *fureur* which, as we are given to understand, it has since attained in the university ; and riding and tandem-driving were the fashions of the ingenuous youth. Pen rode well to hounds, appeared in pink, as became a buck, and not particularly extravagant in equestrian or any other amusement, yet managed to run up a fine bill at Nile's, the livery stable-keeper, and in a good number of other quarters. In fact, this lucky young gentleman had almost every taste to a considerable degree. He was very fond of books of all sorts : Doctor Portman had taught him to like rare editions, and his own taste led him to like beautiful bindings. It was marvellous what tall copies, and gilding, and marbling, and blind-tooling, the booksellers and binders put upon Pen's bookshelves. He had a very fair taste in matters of art, and a keen relish for prints of a high school—none of your French Opera dancers, or tawdry racing prints, such as had delighted the simple eyes of Mr. Spicer, his predecessor—but your Stranges, and Rembrandt

etchings, and Wilkies before the letter, with which his apartments were furnished presently in the most perfect good taste, as was allowed in the university, where this young fellow got no small reputation. We have mentioned that he exhibited a certain partiality for rings, jewellery, and fine raiment of all sorts; and it must be owned that Mr. Pen, during his time at the university, was rather a dressy man, and loved to array himself in splendour. He and his polite friends would dress themselves out with as much care in order to go and dine at each other's rooms, as other folks would who were going to enslave a mistress. They said he used to wear rings over his kid gloves, which he always denies; but what follies will not youth perpetrate with its own admirable gravity and simplicity? That he took perfumed baths is a truth; and he used to say he took them after meeting certain men of a very low set in hall. In Pen's second year, when Miss Fotheringay made her chief hit in London, and scores of prints were published of her, Pen had one of these hung in his bedroom, and confided to the men of his set how awfully, how wildly, how madly, how passionately, he had loved that woman. He showed them in confidence the verses that he had written to her, and his brow would darken, his eyes roll, his chest heave with emotion as he recalled that fatal period of his life, and described the woes and agonies which he had suffered. The verses were copied out, handed about, sneered at, admired, passed from coterie to coterie. There are few things which elevate a lad in the estimation of his brother boys more than to have a character for a great and romantic passion. Perhaps there is something noble in it at all times—among very young men, it is considered heroic—Pen was pronounced a tremendous fellow. They said he had almost committed suicide: that he had fought a duel with a baronet about her. Freshmen pointed him out to each other. As at the promenade time at two o'clock he swaggered out of college, surrounded by his cronies, he was famous to behold. He was elaborately attired. He would ogle the ladies who came to lionise the university, and passed before him on the arms of happy gownsmen, and give his opinion upon their personal charms, or their toilettes, with the gravity of a critic whose experience entitled him to speak with authority. Men used to say that they had been walking with Pendennis, and were as pleased to be seen in his company as some of us would be if we walked with a duke down Pall Mall. He and the Proctor capped each other as they met, as if they were rival powers, and the men hardly knew which was the greater.

In fact, in the course of his second year, Arthur Pendennis had become one of the men of fashion in the university. It is curious to watch that facile admiration, and simple fidelity of youth. They hang round a leader: and wonder at him, and love him, and imitate him. No generous boy ever lived, I suppose, that has not had some wonderment of admiration for another boy; and Monsieur Pen at Oxbridge had his school, his faithful band of friends, and his rivals. When the young men heard at the haberdashers' shops that Mr. Pendennis, of Boniface, had just ordered a crimson satin cravat, you would see a couple of dozen crimson satin cravats in Main Street in the course of the week—and Simon, the jeweller, was known to sell no less than two gross of Pendennis pins, from a pattern which the young gentleman had selected in his shop.

## CHAPTER VI.

CHARLES DICKENS.

Born 1812 A.D. . . . . Died 1870 A.D.

ALTHOUGH for a time it was fashionable in certain circles to disclaim any interest in Dickens, his popularity has never waned, and no other English writer has been so deeply or so continuously beloved. When some of his best novels were appearing in monthly parts, the excited curiosity as to possible developments in the next number was practically universal, extending far beyond the coteries usually concerned with literary topics; and his appeal to-day is scarcely less wide.

Criticism, frequently sound but too often exaggerated and indiscriminate, has inevitably tempered the enthusiasm of his admirers. His faults in taste and technique are glaring; and his work is extraordinarily unequal. But there is no excuse for charging his best manner with irregularities only found in his worst, and considering the conditions of his life and surroundings, we should rather marvel that so little of his work can fairly be called crude or only promising.

For fifteen years, beginning with the meteoric splendour of *The Pickwick Papers*, Dickens poured forth, amidst intoxicating demands "for more," and while always in want of money, no less than nine masterpieces of fiction, including work as varied as *Oliver Twist*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *David Copperfield*, and the *Christmas Carol*. In his later period, undoubtedly, he became less able to conquer his own mannerisms. He imitated himself and accentuated himself with consequences occasionally painful. The marvellous freshness of his greatest triumphs had deserted him, but his hand had not lost its cunning or his imagination its elasticity; and he proved

himself capable of working in a new vein, never repeating a character, still less a plot or a situation.

Charles Dickens, though actually born at Landport, Portsmouth, was essentially a London man, not to say a Cockney.

The family were always in difficulties, Dickens the elder being generally credited with having stood for the inimitable Mr. Micawber; and there is little doubt that very much in the earlier chapters of *David Copperfield* was written straight out of the author's own childish experiences. But during some interval of comparative prosperity Charles was placed in an attorney's office, and soon afterwards joined his father in the busy army of newspaper reporters. Though working with great energy at his business and rapidly becoming an expert, the itch of authorship had already mastered the busy pen, and his *Sketches by Boz* were the worthy first-fruits of his penetrating observation.

But the beginning of his fame dates from the publication of the unrivalled *Pickwick Papers*. The adventures and misadventures of a party of Cockney sportsmen formed the original idea of the book, as proposed by the publisher, and 1836 begun by Dickens. Boz was to write the A.D. chapters, and Seymour to furnish the illustrations. Glimpses of this original plan appear in Mr. Winkle's disastrous rook-shooting—the ride and drive to Dingley Dell—the hot September day among the partridges, when Mr. Pickwick found the cold punch so very pleasant—the skating scene at Manor Farm; but as the work went on the scope of the *Papers* expanded, both the sporting and the club being forgotten, or rarely referred to, in the varied pictures of life through which we follow the fortunes of the kind old bachelor, his three friends, and his attached servant—the inimitable Sam Weller, an indescribable but perfectly natural compound of Cockney slang and the coolest impudence, with rich ever-bubbling humour and the tenderest fidelity.

Then followed *Nicholas Nickleby*, a tale crowded with finely-drawn portraits and scenes of modern English life, among which, perhaps, the sojourn of Nicholas at the wretched Yorkshire school, and his stay among the Portsmouth actors, are richest in character and colouring.

While for a short time editor of *Bentley's Miscellany*, Dickens contributed to its pages the striking story of *Oliver Twist*, in which some of the lowest and vilest forms of London life are painted with a startling truthfulness that rivals the pencil of Defoe. The publication of *Nickleby* in monthly numbers—"putting forth two green leaves a month," as the author expresses it—having proved very successful, a new work was projected, to appear in the same form, and also in low-priced weekly numbers. This was 1840 *Master Humphrey's Clock*, a connected series A.D. of tales, among which there appeared *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge*. The former of these—whose central figure, Little Nell, is one of the most exquisite creations of modern fiction—contains perhaps the finest writing that ever came from his pen. *Barnaby Rudge* is a tale of the eighteenth century, which mingles its fictitious plot with the story of the Gordon Riots in London. A wonderfully gifted raven plays no unimportant part in the drama.

A visit to America supplied material for two new works—*American Notes for General Circulation*, and *Martin Chuzzlewit*, a novel—in both of which he deals very severely with some peculiarities of Trans-1843 atlantic life and character; too severely, we A.D. may safely say, for the tendency of Dickens in all his painting is towards caricature. This fault is an outgrowth of his very power. Seizing in an instant, with an intense abstraction, the odd feature or whimsical bent in any man or woman, he creates a character from that single quality, making its creation stand out in bright and startling relief as the type of a whole class. Among the English char-

acters of *Chuzzlewit*, the scoundrel Pecksniff and the immortal Sairey Gamp are undoubtedly the most artistic and original.

After a twelvemonth in Italy, Dickens came home to establish and edit a morning paper, *The Daily News*, to which he contributed sketches entitled *Pictures from Italy*. But from this heavy and to some extent thankless task he soon returned to the more congenial field of fiction. *Dombey and Son*—the tale of a starched and purse-proud merchant, whose every thought is centred in the House (not of Commons, but of business); *David Copperfield*—the story of a young literary man struggling up to fame as the author himself had done, through the thorny toils of shorthand notes—came out in brilliant succession to delight a million readers. *David Copperfield* is regarded by many as his finest novel.

Dickens now undertook to conduct a weekly serial, called *Household Words*, which became his own property, under the title of *All the Year Round*. To this he contributed *A Child's History of England*, giving a picturesque view of the national growth and fortunes.

The later and, as we have said, the less brilliant works of Dickens include *Bleak House*, founded on the miseries of a suit in Chancery; \* *Hard Times*, the tale of a strike; *Great Expectations*, hinging upon the return of a convict; *Little Dorrit*; and *Our Mutual Friend*. To this group belongs also *A Tale of Two Cities*, which stands almost entirely outside the rest of his work, and attracts readers most hostile to his usual manner. This marvellous story of the French Revolution days and *Barnaby Rudge* are the author's only attempts at historical painting; and seldom, if ever, have the crowded colouring and dramatic happenings of olden days been more vividly expressed in fiction. The historical method of Dickens is not very dissimilar from Kingsley's, and he is probably quite as inaccurate; but in both writers the past



lives again for us, the stirring panorama becomes indelibly stamped on the memory. *A Tale of Two Cities*, moreover, has certain artistic qualities conspicuously absent from *Barnaby Rudge* which cannot be found in any other of its author's works. The plot is admirably constructed, despite its occasionally tortuous order of narration ; everything leads up to its appointed climax, and centres about the principal persons of the drama. There are no irrelevant character parts, and no humorous digressions from the main outline of the story. Its extraordinary mass of illustrative detail and even its outbursts of not entirely successful fine writing serve only to heighten the intensity of the controlling emotions, which stand out with an almost startling clearness from every page.

We should not forget, in reviewing the fruits of Dickens's busy pen, the charming series of Christmas tales, which began in 1843 with *The Christmas Carol*. *The Chimes* and *The Cricket on the Hearth* are deservedly the most popular of these minor works, all of which, to be thoroughly enjoyed, should be read by the cheery light of a Christmas fire, while the polished green and vivid scarlet of the fresh holly boughs wink upon the parlour wall, and the crisp snow sparkles out of doofs in the frosty starlight. No finished portrait is Trotty Veck, but a slightly-filled sketch—what artists call a study—yet who can forget or fail to love the good old fellow ?

On such a portrait Dickens loves to lavish his highest skill. Choosing some character of the most unpromising outward appearance—Smike, the starved, half-witted drudge of a Yorkshire school ; Pinch, the awkward, shambling assistant of a rascally country architect ; Ham, a rough, tar-splashed, weather-beaten fisherman of Yarmouth ; Joe, the huge, stout blacksmith, whose dull brain can scarcely shape a thought clearly into words—he makes us love them all, for the truth, the honesty, the sweet, guileless,

forgiving spirit that lives within the ungainly frame. If Dickens had done no more than create the Tom Pinch of *Chuzzlewit* and the Joe of *Great Expectations*, he would have deserved lasting gratitude and fame. As the commonest weed, the meanest reptile, has its own beauty and its own use in the grand scheme of Creation—as some delicate blossom or tender leaf nestles in the nooks of every ruin, no matter how wildly or how long the storm may have beaten on its walls, or how entirely defaced by war or time the tracery of its stonework may have become—so man or woman never falls so low, never grows so ugly or repulsive, is never so thoroughly ridiculous or stupid, as utterly to lose the outlines of that Divine image in which the ancient parents of the race were created. And although we, with clay-dimmed eyes, cannot clearly see why a man is ugly or a tree distorted, we must not forget that the plainest face and the homeliest manner may cover a noble intellect and a heart beating with tenderest pity and love for humankind. Such we take to be the great moral of Dickens's "sweet, unsullied page."

Although so voluminous a writer, Dickens never lost touch with either the more intimate or the wider aspects of everyday life. Indeed, the domestic details of his career have been canvassed with a fullness not altogether becoming; and we need only remember to-day that some of his children inherited, though not towards the writing of novels, his literary habits, and many of them became distinguished in other fields. He himself retained through life a keen interest in men and affairs (amply testified by the exposure of abuses, often leading to reform, in his novels), was always particularly interested in everything connected with the theatre, and led a very full life.

The still unsolved *Mystery of Edwin Drood*, left unfinished at his death in 1870, amply testifies to the continuous activity of his inventive imagination.

## MR. PICKWICK ON THE ICE.

(FROM "THE PICKWICK PAPERS.")

While Mr. Pickwick was delivering himself of the sentiment just recorded, Mr. Weller and the fat boy, having by their joint endeavours cut out a slide, were exercising themselves thereupon in a very masterly and brilliant manner. Sam Weller, in particular, was displaying that beautiful feat of fancy sliding which is currently denominated "knocking at the cobbler's door," and which is achieved by skimming over the ice on one foot, and occasionally giving a twopenny postman's knock upon it with the other. It was a good long slide, and there was something in the motion which Mr. Pickwick, who was very cold with standing still, could not help envying.

"It looks a nice, warm exercise that, doesn't it?" he inquired of Wardle, when that gentleman was thoroughly out of breath by reason of the indefatigable manner in which he had converted his legs into a pair of compasses, and drawn complicated problems on the ice.

"Ah, it does indeed," replied Wardle. "Do you slide?"

"I used to do so, on the gutters, when I was a boy," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Try it now," said Wardle.

"Oh, do, please, Mr. Pickwick!" cried all the ladies.

"I should be very happy to afford you any amusement," replied Mr. Pickwick, "but I haven't done such a thing these thirty years."

"Pooh! pooh! Nonsense!" said Wardle, dragging off his skates with the impetuosity which characterized all his proceedings. "Here; I'll keep you company. Come along!" And away went the good-tempered old fellow down the slide, with a rapidity which came very close upon Mr. Weller, and beat the fat boy all to nothing.

Mr. Pickwick paused, considered, pulled off his gloves and put them in his hat; took two or three short runs, balked himself as often, and at last took another run, and went slowly and gravely down the slide, with his feet about a yard and a quarter apart, amidst the gratified shouts of all the spectators.

"Keep the pot a-bilin', sir!" said Sam; and down went Wardle again, and then Mr. Pickwick, and then Sam, and then Mr. Winkle, and then Mr. Bob Sawyer, and then the fat boy, and then Mr. Snodgrass, following closely upon each other's heels, and running after each other with as much eagerness as if all their future prospects in life depended on their expedition.

It was the most intensely interesting thing to observe the manner in which Mr. Pickwick performed his share in the ceremony: to watch the torture of anxiety with which he viewed the person behind, gaining upon him at the imminent hazard of tripping him up; to see him gradually expend the painful force which he had put on at first, and turn slowly round on the slide, with his face towards the point from which he had started; to contemplate the playful smile which mantled on his face when he had accomplished the distance, and the eagerness with which he turned round when he had done so and ran after his predecessor—his black gaiters tripping pleasantly through the snow, and his eyes beaming cheerfulness and gladness through his spectacles. And when he was knocked down

(which happened upon the average every third round) it was the most invigorating sight that can possibly be imagined to behold him gather up his hat, gloves, and handkerchief, with a glowing countenance, and resume his station in the rank with an ardour and enthusiasm that nothing could abate.

The sport was at its height, the sliding was at the quickest, the laughter was at the loudest, when a sharp, smart crack was heard. There was a quick rush towards the bank, a wild scream from the ladies, and a shout from Mr. Tupman. A large mass of ice disappeared: the water bubbled up over it; Mr. Pickwick's hat, gloves, and handkerchief were floating on the surface; and this was all of Mr. Pickwick that anybody could see.

Dismay and anguish were depicted on every countenance; the males turned pale, and the females fainted; Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle grasped each other by the hand, and gazed at the spot where their leader had gone down, with frenzied eagerness; while Mr. Tupman, by way of rendering the promptest assistance, and at the same time conveying to any persons who might be within hearing the clearest possible notion of the catastrophe, ran off across the country at his utmost speed, screaming "Fire!" with all his might.

It was at this very moment, when old Wardle and Sam Weller were approaching the hole with cautious steps, and Mr. Benjamin Allen was holding a hurried consultation with Mr. Bob Sawyer on the advisability of bleeding the company generally, as an improving little bit of professional practice—it was at this very moment that a face, head, and shoulders emerged from beneath the water, and disclosed the features and spectacles of Mr. Pickwick.

"Keep yourself up for an instant—for only one instant!" bawled Mr. Snodgrass.

"Yes, do; let me implore you—for my sake!" roared Mr. Winkle, deeply affected. The adjuration was rather unnecessary—the probability being that if Mr. Pickwick had declined to keep himself up for anybody else's sake, it would have occurred to him that he might as well do so for his own.

"Do you feel the bottom there, old fellow?" said Wardle.

"Yes, certainly," replied Mr. Pickwick, wringing the water from his head and face, and gasping for breath. "I fell upon my back. I couldn't get on my feet at first."

The clay upon so much of Mr. Pickwick's coat as was yet visible bore testimony to the accuracy of this statement; and as the fears of the spectators were still further relieved by the fat boy's suddenly recollecting that the water was nowhere more than five feet deep, prodigies of valour were performed to get him out. After a vast quantity of splashing, and cracking, and struggling, Mr. Pickwick was at length fairly extricated from his unpleasant position, and once more stood on dry land.

"Oh, he'll catch his death of cold," said Emily.

"Dear old thing!" said Arabella. "Let me wrap this shawl round you, Mr. Pickwick."

"Ah, that's the best thing you can do," said Wardle; "and when you've got it on, run home as fast as your legs can carry you, and jump into bed directly."

A dozen shawls were offered on the instant. Three or four of the thickest having been selected, Mr. Pickwick was wrapped up, and

started off, under the guidance of Mr. Weller—presenting the singular phenomenon of an elderly gentleman, dripping wet, and without a hat, with his arms bound down to his sides, skimming over the ground, without any clearly-defined purpose, at the rate of six good English miles an hour.

But Mr. Pickwick cared not for appearances in such an extreme case, and urged on by Sam Weller, he kept at the very top of his speed until he reached the door of Manor Farm, where Mr. Tupman had arrived some five minutes before, and had frightened the old lady into palpitations of the heart by impressing her with the unalterable conviction that the kitchen chimney was on fire—a calamity which always presented itself in glowing colours to the old lady's mind when anybody about her evinced the smallest agitation.

Mr. Pickwick paused not an instant until he was snug in bed. Sam Weller lighted a blazing fire in the room, and took up his dinner; a bowl of punch was carried up afterwards, and a grand carouse held in honour of his safety. Old Wardle would not hear of his rising, so they made the bed the chair, and Mr. Pickwick presided. A second and a third bowl were ordered in. And when Mr. Pickwick awoke next morning there was not a symptom of rheumatism about him; which proves, as Mr. Bob Sawyer very justly observed, that there is nothing like hot punch in such cases; and that if ever hot punch did fail to act as a preventive, it was merely because the patient fell into the vulgar error of not taking enough of it.

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### A PROPHECY.

(FROM "A TALE OF TWO CITIES.")

They said of him, about the city that night, that it was the peacefullest man's face ever beheld there. Many added that he looked sublime and prophetic.

One of the most remarkable sufferers by the same axe—a woman—had asked at the foot of the same scaffold, not long before, to be allowed to write down the thoughts that were inspiring her. If he had given any utterance to his, and they were prophetic, they would have been these:—

"I see Barsad, and Cly, Defarge, The Vengeance, the Juryman, the Judge, long ranks of the new oppressors who have risen on the destruction of the old, perishing by this retributive instrument, before it shall cease out of its present use. I see a beautiful city and a brilliant people rising from this abyss, and, in their struggles to be truly free, in their triumphs and defeats, through long, long years to come, I see the evil of this time and of the previous time of which this is the natural birth, gradually making expiation for itself and wearing out.

"I see the lives for which I lay down my life, peaceful, useful, prosperous, and happy, in that England which I shall see no more. I see Her with a child upon her bosom, who bears my name. I see her father, aged and bent, but otherwise restored, and faithful to all men in his healing office, and at peace. I see the good old man, so long their friend, in ten years' time enriching them with all he has, and passing tranquilly to his reward.

"I see that I hold a sanctuary in their hearts and in the hearts

of their descendants, generations hence. I see her, an old woman, weeping for me on the anniversary of this day. I see her and her husband, their course done, lying side by side in their last earthly bed, and I know that each was not more honoured and held sacred in the other's soul, than I was in the souls of both.

"I see that child who lay upon her bosom and who bore my name, a man winning his way up in that path of life which once was mine. I see him winning it so well that my name is made illustrious there by the light of his. I see the blots I threw upon it, faded away. I see him, foremost of just judges and honoured men, bringing a boy of my name, with a forehead that I know and golden hair, to this place—then fair to look upon, with not a trace of this day's disfigurement—and I hear him tell the child my story, with a tender and a faltering voice.

"It is a far, far better thing that I do than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known."

## CHAPTER VII.

JOHN STUART MILL.

Born 1806 A.D. . . . . Died 1873 A.D.

THE reputation of Mill rests obviously on his contributions to the abstract sciences of logic and political economy. He wrote upon more popular subjects in his *Liberty* and *The Subjection of Women*, but his social theories are already out of date.

Yet there is about his style a somewhat elusive charm which will ensure his survival in literature; while the *Autobiography* reveals a life and character of unfailing interest to any serious student of humanity.

In all probability the curious fascination of his writings arose from a unique combination of simplicity and precision. He was also conspicuous for moral fervour. His exposition was clear and decisive; he showed tact in discerning the sensibilities of his readers, without being ever for a single moment colloquial or familiar. In this admixture of the popular with the severe, particularly characteristic of his political writings, may be found the true explanation of his undoubted authority.

The *Autobiography*, confirmed in every particular



by those who have specially studied the man and his career, gives us the picture of a man, almost miraculously precocious in childhood, officially occupied, like his father, throughout the greater part of his life in a highly honourable but not exacting position by the East India Company, but always absorbed in the study and the expression of Utilitarianism. Though not extensively social, he was a good conversationalist, and always welcomed the stimulus of opposition on his favourite topics.

Mill was born in London on May 20, 1806.

1806 He is said to have begun the study of Greek  
A.D. at three—and seems to have read much in that language, besides history, travels, and a few story books—before he started Latin, and began to teach his younger sister at the age of eight years and four months. He was addicted to writing histories, particularly of Rome and Holland. A very remarkable letter, dated July 1819—that is, in his fourteenth year—details the progress of his studies from eight to thirteen, including conic sections and Newton at nine, astronomy and fluxions at eleven, logic at twelve, and political economy at thirteen, besides a bewildering array of other advanced subjects. During the same period he had taken his sister through much Latin and Greek mythology, and “as far as the extraction of the cube root.” His father apparently expected a daily account of his reading during their morning walks, and diaries on this and any reflections that might “attest his thinking powers” whenever the boy was away from home. It has been calculated that he must have worked at least nine hours a day; and family talk generally resolved itself into “a hearing and giving of lessons.”

Such was his life until, in 1823, at the age of seventeen, he entered the examiner's office of the India House on an annual gratuity of £30. Five years later he was made an assistant, at £600 a year; and ultimately, in 1856, he succeeded the poet-novelist Peacock (who himself had followed the elder Mill) as

examiner, on a salary of £2,000 a year, receiving a pension of £1,500 on the transfer of the Company's government to the Crown, two years later.

Mill, therefore, was always comparatively busy and comparatively prosperous. His services were valued by the Company; and his *Petition to Parliament*, drawn up while its abolition was being discussed, was pronounced by Earl Grey to be "the ablest State paper he had ever read."

But his official duties were for the most part carried out with no great expenditure of brain energy; and he continued the writing of articles, mostly in *The Westminster Review*, on history, politics, and political economy, which he had started in 1822. Roughly speaking, the ten years before 1830, when he first "put on paper ideas on logical distinctions among terms, and the import of propositions," were occupied in co-ordinating the first independent ideas naturally arising from the severe educational discipline to which he had been subjected in boyhood and the ruling influences of his father's mind. They also include the first of these mental crises, or fits of morbid dejection, to which he was always subject, and which were undoubtedly the inevitable result of overwork, begun in childhood and maintained throughout life. They were too often accompanied by an absolute physical breakdown of some sort or other, and were small matters of surprise to his best friends, though he could never himself be brought to acknowledge their true cause.

From 1835 to 1840, Mill was the proprietor and virtual editor of *The London Review*, soon incorporated with the *Westminster*, in which he made "a noble experiment to endeavour to combine opposites, and to maintain a perpetual attitude of sympathy with hostile opinions." While representing the Utilitarians he always respected real ability, and inserted numerous articles requiring an editorial *caveat*. The influence of the *Review* was, of course, strictly limited, and it

could never have been a financial success; but among the real leaders of thought it did much for Mill's reputation, and it established his personality in many quarters.

Meanwhile his first great work had been gradually assuming its final form, and the *System of Logic* was ready in 1842. Curiously enough, it was declined by Mr. John Murray, but eagerly accepted by J. W. Parker, and issued the following year. Its author became practically at once "the most typical and the best accredited representative of the empirical school" so generally dominant in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Philosophical speculation has not advanced precisely in the direction anticipated by the best thinkers of that day; but Mill's *Logic* remains a classic. Only five years later came the *Principles of Political Economy*, which fully sustained its author's reputation, and opened "an entirely new vista to economic speculations."

These two epoch-making volumes contain the whole of Mill's great original work. He was never able to repeat the impression made on the world by their publication. There is, of course, a sense in which some of his subsequent minor works were more generally popular. He became more and more absorbed in the outlook for social improvements, a matter of daily concern to "the man in the street," and he devoted himself almost exclusively to practical application, detailed exposition, and polemics, which are naturally more intelligible and more interesting to the public than the abstractions of scientific philosophy.

He stepped, not altogether with distinction, into the arena of party politics, and never swerved from the active exercise of what constituted his ideal of life, "the delight in the exertion of his faculties and in the prospect of public good accruing therefrom." When, in 1873, his physicians reported that recovery was impossible, he replied calmly, "My work is done."

Mill was always eager to connect his thoughts with the "previously existing body of speculation," and was "more at pains to conceal his originality" than "most writers are to set forth" this quality, a fact which has too frequently discredited the independent value of his work. His collective influence was accumulated from a multitude of small impressions, producing a mighty whole.

Unquestionably, however, he was the first to enforce the lesson that, because political economy is a science, its conclusions should not necessarily regulate human conduct. "It tells us that certain modes of action lead to certain results;" we must decide for ourselves how far the end is desirable at the cost which its attainment involves.

"It is in no slight degree, through the constant recognition of this truth, that he was enabled to divest of repulsiveness even the most abstract speculations, and to impart a glow of human interest to all that he has touched."

#### RATIONAL OPINIONS AND RATIONAL CULTURE.

(FROM "LIBERTY.")

When we consider either the history of opinion, or the ordinary conduct of human life, to what is it to be ascribed that the one and the other are no worse than they are? Not certainly to the inherent force of the human understanding; for, on any matter not self-evident, there are ninety-nine persons totally incapable of judging of it, for one who is capable; and the capacity of the hundredth person is only comparative; for the majority of the eminent men of every past generation held many opinions now known to be erroneous, and did or approved numerous things which no one will now justify. Why is it, then, that there is on the whole a preponderance among mankind of rational opinions and rational conduct? If there really is this preponderance—which there must be unless human affairs are, and have always been, in an almost desperate state—it is owing to a quality of the human mind, the source of everything respectable in man either as an intellectual or as a moral being, namely, that his errors are corrigible. He is capable of rectifying his mistakes, by discussion and experience. Not by experience alone. There must be discussion, to show how experience is to be interpreted. Wrong opinions and practices gradually yield to fact and argument; but facts and arguments, to produce any effect on the mind, must be brought before it. Very few facts are able to tell their own story, without comments to bring out their

meaning. The whole strength and value, then, of human judgment, depending on the one property, that it can be set right when it is wrong, reliance can be placed on it only when the means of setting it right are kept constantly at hand. In the case of any person whose judgment is really deserving of confidence, how has it become so? Because he has kept his mind open to criticism of his opinions and conduct. Because it has been his practice to listen to all that could be said against him; to profit by as much of it as was just, and to expound to himself, and upon occasion to others, the fallacy of what was fallacious. Because he has felt, that the only way in which a human being can make some approach to knowing the whole of a subject, is by hearing what can be said about it by persons of every variety of opinion, and studying all modes in which it can be looked at by every character of mind. No wise man ever acquired his wisdom in any mode but this; nor is it in the nature of human intellect to become wise in any other manner. The steady habit of correcting and completing his own opinion by collating it with those of others, so far from causing doubt and hesitation in carrying it into practice, is the only stable foundation for a just reliance on it: for being cognisant of all that can, at least obviously, be said against him, and having taken up his position against all gainsayers—knowing that he has sought for objections and difficulties, instead of avoiding them, and has shut out no light which can be thrown upon the subject from any quarter—he has a right to think his judgment better than that of any person, or any multitude, who have not gone through a similar process.

It is not too much to require that what the wisest of mankind, those who are best entitled to trust their own judgment, find necessary to warrant their relying on it, should be submitted to by that miscellaneous collection of a few wise and many foolish individuals called the public. The most intolerant of churches, the Roman Catholic Church, even at the canonization of a saint, admits and listens patiently to a devil's advocate. The holiest of men, it appears, cannot be admitted to posthumous honours, until all that the devil could say against him is known and weighed. If even the Newtonian philosophy were not permitted to be questioned, mankind could not feel as complete assurance of its truth as they do now. The beliefs which we have most warrant for have no safeguard to rest on, but a standing invitation to the whole world to prove them unfounded. If the challenge is not accepted, or is accepted and the attempt fails, we are far enough from certainty still; but we have done the best that the existing state of human reason admits of; we have neglected nothing that could give the truth a chance of reaching us; if the lists are kept open, we may hope that if there be a better truth, it will be found when the human mind is capable of receiving it; and in the meantime we may rely on having attained such approach to truth as is possible in our own day. This is the amount of certainty attainable by a fallible being, and this is the sole way of attaining it.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

Born 1795 A.D. . . . . Died 1881 A.D.

It was said that Thomas Carlyle thought in German—a statement which, without looking too closely into its accuracy, may be accepted as a brief definition of his remarkable mind. From the leading German writers his thoughts caught much colouring, and his style some of its most startling qualities.

Born on December 4, 1795, in the parish of Ecclefechan, in Dumfriesshire, he enjoyed the incalculable blessing of wise and pious parents in that honest mason and mason's wife whom he called father and mother. After attending school at Annan he passed to the University of Edinburgh, where his earnest mind was devoted chiefly to mathematical studies under Leslie. The student became for a while a teacher, as mathematical master at Annan and master at Kirkcaldy, and afterwards as tutor to the three sons of Mr. Buller. His parents had destined him for the Church. But, though always teaching or preaching, neither the schoolroom nor the pulpit was his fitting sphere. Literature soon attracting him with resistless power, he began that career of authorship which has placed his name among the first in English literature.

Some short biographies for Brewster's *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, among which were *Montesquieu*, *Montaigne*, *Nelson*, *The Pitts*—a translation of *Legendre's Geometry*—and, more important than 1824 any of these, as an early indication of the A.D. future direction of his thoughts, a translation of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, were the literary labours of 1824, his first year of pen-work.

A *Life of Schiller*, published by scattered chapters in *The London Magazine*, and afterwards enlarged, was the second fruit of this Scottish sapling grafted upon



German thought. It appeared in 1825 as a separate volume. During the following year the author became a married man, with no other resources than those of brain and pen.

For several years Craigenputtock, a small estate about fifteen miles north-west of Dumfries—a patch of corn land nestling among trees in the middle of the bleak Galloway moors—was the congenial home of this great man, whose mind, prone by nature and by habit to dwell apart, “wrapped in the solitude of its own originality,” flamed out occasionally from its hermit-cell upon the *shams* and *flunkeyism* of that seething world whose roar lay beyond the swelling granite hills. In this lonely nook he wrote several things for the Reviews, among which *Characteristics* and *Burns* in the *Edinburgh*, and *Goethe* in the *Foreign Quarterly*, are notable. His estimate of Burns is remarkable for its sympathetic justice, and its straightforward recognition in the poet of a true manhood, swathed in wretched environments. And not less is it remarkable as our finest specimen of Carlyle’s earlier manner, before he had laid aside the conventional forms of English speech for that language of splintered fire, rapid and sudden as the forked lightning, and often as jagged, which we find in his later works.

But *Sartor Resartus* (The Patcher Repatched) was the principal result of the quiet thoughtfulness—by study-fire or on pony’s back—to which the Craigenputtock life was chiefly given up. Professing to be a review of a German work on dress, it is in reality a philosophical essay, illustrating in a very original and powerful style the transcendentalism of Fichte. Professor Diogenes Teufelsdröckh is the imaginary mouthpiece through which Carlyle inveighs against the old clothes of falsehood and conventionalism that smother and conceal a Divine idea lying wrapped in the centre of our human life. So odd the subject and apparently grotesque the style, that London publishers looked very shy at the offered manuscript, which could find

its way to the public only in fragments through the pages of *Fraser's Magazine* (1833-34).

The year 1837 is the central point in Carlyle's literary life, for then appeared *The French Revolution, a History*, written as no history had ever been written before. All the scenes in that wonderful tale of blood and tears flash out upon our gaze, as we read, with a startling vividness and distinctness of outline entirely unlike the stately pictures of Gibbon and Macaulay, and thoroughly in keeping with the wild hurry and seeming disjointedness of the tumultuous time. Carlyle's pen never outdid this brilliant historic piece. But it must not be forgotten that those who wish to know *all* the *minutiæ* of the French Revolution 1837 must supplement their reading of Carlyle's *His-* A.D. *tory* with the study of calmer works, which aim, not so much at fixing on the mind with bright sun-darts a succession of indelible photographs, as at heaping together with quiet and careful industry all the details of the tremendous drama. Defiant of critical canons, and regarding that stately pomp of diction which some think "the dignity of history" requires, as an intolerable sham, this hater of old clothes works out his own ideas in his own way—paints with a brush of daring lawlessness—is minute at one time, even to the wart on a hero's eyebrow, at another so broad in his treatment that a single dash of colour depicts a man—violates every propriety of conventional art, historical perspective excepted—fills his pages with abrupt and startling apostrophes—often flings together a bundle of words, which, upon cool analysis, we find to be a mass of disjointed notes—drives at full swing through all school notions of logical order and grammatical arrangement, scattering right and left into ignominious exile nominatives and verbs, articles and pronouns, and yet strikes so surely to the brain and heart that his pictures, printed with an instantaneous flash, live on the mental retina for ever.

The delivery of certain courses of lectures on *Ger-*

*man Literature*, *The History of Literature*, the *Periods of European Culture*, and *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, and *the Heroic in History* (1840), combined with the production of a tract on *Chartism* (1839) and a historical contrast entitled *Past and Present* (1843), occupied eight years between the publication of the *French Revolution* and the appearance of a second great work.

*The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell, with Elucidations*, a vast heap of materials, collected with painful patience from all sources—"fished up," as the collector tells us, "from foul Lethean quagmires, and washed clean from foreign stupidities—such a job of buck-washing as I do not long to repeat"—was given to the world in fair order and modernized form, the great Puritan being made to speak from the dead past with his own voice and pen. This book, however, is no mere edition of Cromwell's works. What he modestly called "Elucidations," the setting of these rough recovered gems, are brilliant specimens of Carlyle's

historic style. His portraiture of the great  
 1845 Oliver and his battle-piece of Dunbar are  
 A.D. well worthy of the pencil which drew Mirabeau and Marie Antoinette, the storming of the Bastille, and the shrill drum-led march of the Paris women to Versailles. That *substratum* of the Puritan or old Covenanter in his character kindled into volcanic flame when Cromwell formed his theme. He was indeed himself a literary Cromwell, waging sternest war with all the force of an earnest soul against modern humbug, untruth, and noisy pretension. No wonder that this soldier of the pen, among the staunchest of our century, looking back across two hundred years of history, should have recognized natural royalty in the craggy brow, solid frame, and iron soul of a Huntingdon farmer who could lead armies to certain triumph and dissolve a senate with the stamping of his foot. An electric sympathy linked the two: true manhood sharpened Cromwell's sword and true manhood guided Carlyle's pen.

The toppling thrones and surging peoples of the disastrous year 1848 stirred the impulsive oracle to a vehement utterance. The *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (1850) assailed with most galling invective and contemptuous ridicule the leading politicians and institutions of the country. The hollowness of great men and the servility of small are lashed with a furious, stinging whip, whose thongs, steeped in the salt of grim, fantastic wit, cut and smart to the very bone. Yet many blows are too fierce, too sweeping, and many fall harmless upon sound and honest things.

His *Life of John Sterling* (1851), a brilliant essayist who had conducted *The Athenæum* for a while, and who died prematurely in 1844, is a model of sympathetic biography.

During his later years Carlyle resided chiefly at Chelsea. His last great work was *The History of Friedrich II., commonly called Frederick the Great*. This stern soldier was chosen as the hero of a new work, not because the historian believed him to have been a truly great man, but "because he managed *not* to be a liar and a charlatan, as his century was." Frederick and Voltaire are to Carlyle the two types of action and of thought in the eighteenth cen- 1858  
tury. In 1858 the first and second volumes A.D.  
of *Frederick* appeared; but they were only preliminary to the greater story of his reign, bringing his life through a tangled thicket of Brandenburg and Hohenzollern genealogy, up to the death, in 1740, of his bearish old father, Friedrich Wilhelm. Carlyle visited the leading battlefields of the Seven Years' War while collecting material for the concluding volumes of his History. Though inferior to his *French Revolution*, this work presents here and there pictures coloured with that lawless but potent brilliance, that wild, abrupt, impulsive touch, which distinguish this master's style from that of all other writers of English. Neither Clarendon nor Gibbon nor Macaulay, all great masters of the historic pencil and well skilled in the

portraiture of men, could match—certainly none of them could excel—that image of the great Frederick—the very Fritz himself—that starts to life in Carlyle's pages.

In his later years Carlyle wrote *Reminiscences* of his life, in which he described with graphic pen, but with occasional bitterness of spirit, the characters of his personal and literary friends. These *Reminiscences*, edited by Mr. Froude, were published shortly after Carlyle's death, which occurred early in 1881.

Although the enormous influence of Carlyle's works on English thought in the middle of the nineteenth century has suffered an eclipse, his name abides among the mighty few who heralded and created that great awakening to a new breadth of outlook, intellectual sincerity, and eager love of knowledge which characterized the Victorian Era. His personality will always be stimulating, and his contributions to history are of permanent value. Though his style would form a most perilous model for any student of literary art, its appropriateness to the man writing and the subjects written about is absolutely unique. It becomes in his hands a veritable instrument of creation. Carlyle cared supremely for two things with which the nineteenth century was always keenly concerned—"ethical and religious conduct in the individual, and political history in the general." He seldom touched other subjects, never with profit; but on those he stands out, by virtue of heroic industry in research and heroic frankness in utterance, a herculean force.

#### PORTRAIT OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

He is a king every inch of him, though without the trappings of a king. Presents himself in a Spartan simplicity of vesture: no crown, but an old military cocked hat—generally old, or trampled and kneaded into absolute *softness* if new; no sceptre but one like Agamemnon's, a walking-stick cut from the woods, which serves also as a riding-stick (with which he hits the horse "between the ears," say authors); and for royal robes, a mere soldier's blue coat with red facings,—coat likely to be old, and sure to have a good deal of

Spanish snuff on the breast of it ; rest of the apparel dim, unobtrusive in colour or cut, ending in high overknee military boots, which may be brushed (and, I hope, kept soft with an underhand suspicion of oil), but are not permitted to be blackened or varnished, —Day and Martin with their soot-pots forbidden to approach. The man is not of god-like physiognomy, any more than of imposing stature or costume : close-shut mouth with thin lips, prominent jaws and nose, receding brow, by no means of Olympian height ; head, however, is of long form, and has superlative gray eyes in it. Not what is called a beautiful man ; nor yet, by all appearance, what is called a happy. On the contrary, the face bears evidence of many sorrows, as they are termed, of much hard labour done in this world ; and seems to anticipate nothing but more still coming. Quiet stoicism, capable enough of what joys there were, but not expecting any worth mention ; great unconscious and some conscious pride, well tempered with a cheery mockery of humour, are written on that old face, which carries its chin well forward, in spite of the slight stoop about the neck ; snuffy nose, rather flung into the air, under its old cocked hat, like an old snuffy lion on the watch ; and such a pair of eyes as no man, or lion, or lynx of that century bore elsewhere, according to all the testimony we have. “Those eyes,” says Mirabeau, “which, at the bidding of his great soul, fascinated you with seduction or with terror.” Most excellent, potent, brilliant eyes, swift-darting as the stars, steadfast as the sun ; gray, we said, of the azure-gray colour ; large enough, not of glaring size ; the habitual expression of them vigilance and penetrating sense, rapidity resting on depth. Which is an excellent combination, and gives us the notion of a lambent outer radiance, springing from some great inner sea of light and fire in the man. The voice, if he speak to you, is of similar physiognomy : clear, melodious, and sonorous ; all tones are in it, from that of ingenuous inquiry, graceful sociality, light-flowing banter (rather prickly for most part), up to definite word of command, up to desolating word of rebuke and reprobation.

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### THE THIRD VOTING.

(FROM “THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.”)

And so, finally, at eight in the evening this Third stupendous Voting, by roll-call or *appel nominal*, does begin. What Punishment ? Girondins undecided, Patriots decided, men afraid of Royalty, men afraid of Anarchy, must answer here and now. Infinite Patriotism, dusky in the lamp-light, floods all corridors, crowds all galleries ; sternly waiting to hear. Shrill-sounding Ushers summon you by Name and Department ; you must rise to the Tribune, and say.

Eye-witnesses have represented this scene of the Third Voting, and of the votings that grew out of it,—a scene protracted, like to be endless, lasting with but few brief intervals, from Wednesday till Sunday morning,—as one of the strangest seen in the Revolution. Long night wears itself into day, morning’s paleness is spread over all faces ; and again the wintry shadows sink, and the dim lamps are lit : but through day and night and the vicissitudes of hours,



Member after Member is mounting continually those Tribune steps ; pausing aloft there, in the clearer upper light, to speak his Fate-word ; then diving down into the dust and throng again. Like Phantoms in the hour of midnight ; most spectral, pandemonial ! Never did President Vergniaud, or any terrestrial President, superintend the like. A King's life, and so much else that depends thereon, hangs trembling in the balance. Man after man mounts ; the buzz hushes itself till he have spoken Death : Banishment ; Imprisonment till the Peace. Many say, Death ; with what cautious well-studied phrases and paragraphs they could devise, of explanation, of enforcement, of faint recommendation to mercy. Many too say, Banishment ; something short of Death. The balance trembles, none can yet guess whitherward. Whereat anxious Patriotism bellows ; irrepressible by ushers.

The poor Girondins many of them, under such fierce bellowing of Patriotism, say Death ; justifying, *motivant* that most miserable word of theirs by some brief casuistry and jesuitry. Vergniaud himself says Death ; justifying by jesuitry. Rich Lepelletier Saint Fargeau had been of the Noblesse, and then of the Patriot Left Side in the Constituent ; and had argued and reported, there and elsewhere, not a little, *against* Capital Punishment : nevertheless he now says, Death : a word which may cost him dear. Manuel did surely rank with the Decided in August last ; but he has been sinking and backsliding ever since September and the scenes of September. In this convention, above all, no word he could speak would find favour ; he says now, Banishment ; and in mute wrath quits the place forever,—much hustled in the corridors. Philippe Égalité votes, in his soul and conscience, Death ; at the sound of which and of whom, even Patriotism shakes its head ; and there runs a groan and shudder through this Hall of Doom. Robespierre's vote cannot be doubtful ; his speech is long. Men see the figure of shrill Sieyes ascend ; hardly pausing, passing merely, this figure says, "*La Mort sans phrase*, Death without phrases ;" and fares onward and downward. Most spectral, pandemonial !

And yet if the Reader fancy it of a funereal, sorrowful or even grave character, he is far mistaken : "the Ushers in the Mountain quarter," says Mercier, "had become as Box keepers at the Opera ;" opening and shutting of Galleries for privileged persons, for "D'Orléans Égalité's mistresses," or other high-dizened women of condition, rustling with laces and tricolour. Gallant Deputies pass and repass thitherward, treating them with ices, refreshments, and small talk ; the high-dizened heads beck responsive ; some have their card and pin, pricking down the Ayes and Noes, as at a game of Rouge-et-Noir. Farther aloft reigns Mère Duchesse with her unrouged Amazons ; she cannot be prevented making long Hahas, when the vote is not *La Mort*. In these Galleries there is refec-tion, drinking of wine and brandy as in open tavern—" *en pleine tabagie*." Betting goes on in all coffee-houses of the neighbourhood. But within doors, fatigue, impatience, uttermost weariness sits now on all visages ; lighted up only from time to time by turns of the game. Members have fallen asleep ; Ushers come and awaken them to vote : other Members calculate whether they shall not have time to run and dine. Figures rise, like phantoms, pale in the dusky lamp light ; utter from this Tribune, only one word :

Death. "*Tout est optique*," says Mercier, "The world is all an optical shadow." Deep in the Thursday night, when the voting is done, and Secretaries are summing it up, sick Duchâtel, more spectral than another, comes borne on a chair, wrapped in blankets, in "nightgown and nightcap," to vote for Mercy: one vote it is thought may turn the scale.

Ah no! In profoundest silence, President Vergniaud with a voice full of sorrow, has to say: "I declare, in the name of the Convention, that the punishment it pronounces on Louis Capet is that of Death." Death by a small majority of fifty-three. Nay, if we deduct from the one side, and add to the other, a certain twenty-six, who said Death, but coupled some faintest ineffectual surmise of mercy with it, the majority will be but one.

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## CHAPTER IX.

BENJAMIN DISRAELI (EARL OF BEACONSFIELD).

Born 1804 A.D. . . . . Died 1881 A.D.

THERE can be no doubt that Englishmen instinctively distrust brilliance and versatility; and the literary reputation of Disraeli has suffered unjustly, though inevitably, from this national trait. We are far too apt to shake our heads gravely over the Eastern luxuriance of his imagination, being honestly convinced that a man who was fluent about so many matters must be shallow in some.

It is indeed perfectly true that his fancy is often fantastic, the colouring unduly lavish, the ornament tawdry and overdone, the sentiment inflated. But he was neither vulgar nor pretentious. Much of his apparent over-emphasis or "fine language" is deliberately assumed as a veil for the most biting sarcasm and the most profound thought. The mental vision is always absolutely clear, the grasp of human nature is phenomenal, the wealth of imagination is lavish, and beneath it all runs, deep and masterful, the undercurrent of brooding melancholy, the heritage of his Semitic ancestry.

Disraeli's father, Isaac, had a marked literary bent, and holds a niche in the history of books. In the pref-

ance to *Lothair* his son declares that he was "born in a library, and trained from early childhood by learned men who did not share the passions and prejudices of our political and social life." In fact, he was privately educated, and the guiding stimulus of his youth, reflected in *Vivian Grey*, was an enthusiasm for cultured learning and faith in the power of the pen.

He was singularly precocious, having completed his first novel when little more than a boy, and published the first part of it in 1826, when he was only twenty-one. *Vivian Grey* took the world by A.D. storm. It is certainly immature and affected, but its knowledge, its boldness of thought, and the reckless audacity of its treatment are astonishing. Its picturesque originality gains rather than loses by the flight of time.

The author himself recognized, even in the heat of composition, that he had not yet learnt to control his own powers. He knew that he had attempted more than he could accomplish. His breathless and disordered conclusion contains a remarkable confession. "I have too much presumed," he says, "upon an attention which I am not able to command. I am as yet but standing without the gate of the garden of romance. True it is that as I gaze through the ivory bars of its golden portal I would fain believe that, following my roving fancy, I might arrive at some green retreats hitherto unexplored, and loiter among some leafy bowers where none have lingered before me. But these expectations may be as vain as those dreams of youth over which all have mourned. The disappointment of manhood succeeds to the delusion of youth; let us hope that the heritage of old age is not despair."

Success apparently did not tempt the young novelist to hasty production. Though he began *Alroy* immediately after *Vivian Grey*, it was not published till seven years later, his experience being meanwhile widened and stimulated by some years of travel in the East. It

was, indeed, preceded by *The Young Duke* (1831) and *Contarini Fleming* (1832), of which the latter most fully reveals the influence of distant lands and foreign literatures. It is a poem in prose, specially appreciated by Heine and Goethe, while a private letter of the author's at this date declares that "the staunchest admirer he had in London, and the most discerning appreciator of *Contarini*, is old Madame d'Arblay."

This was followed, in 1837, by *Henrietta Temple*, a love story, and *Venetia*, introducing Byron and Shelley. Disraeli was still known as a writer of romance. But other ambitions, new fields to conquer, were dividing his attention. He now entered Parliament, and embarked upon that remarkable career which, beginning in almost universal ridicule, ultimately raised him to the highest pinnacle of political fortune—a Premier of Great Britain, with a European reputation.

For a time Disraeli the novelist was silent. But during the struggle for supremacy in a House of Commons still incredulous and disposed to banter, he determined on a final and persuasive enunciation of his principles in a form most likely to arrest public opinion. The three remarkable novels, *Coningsby*, *Sybil*, and *Tancred, or the New Crusade*, were avowedly written with a purpose, and have the common defects of all work so inspired. Yet they probably represent the novelist at his best. The cruder exaggerations have almost disappeared, and the characters of *Coningsby*, for example, are drawn with strength and insight, the satire is weighty. He is still unexpectedly pictorial, but more masculine and practical. *Sybil* contains a graphic picture of poverty, entailed by manufacture, for which only an industrious concentration of purpose could have supplied the reliable detail. In *Tancred* we find predominant a trait, hitherto studiously kept in the background, which yet controlled, and explains, the very ground-work of his complex nature—the passionate racial sympathy and pride so eminently characteristic of the Jew. His descriptions of the Holy

Land revive all, and more than all, the old wealth of ornament, the old habit of poetical rhapsody.

In 1848, Disraeli became leader of the Conservative party; in 1852 he entered the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Exchequer; and in 1868 he was first appointed Prime Minister.

For nearly a quarter of a century he published, and presumably wrote, no romance. But during 1881 the closing decade of his busy life he once more A.D. resumed the pen. *Lothair* appeared soon after his first Premiership, and *Endymion* in 1880, after his final retirement from office. In 1881 he died.

These two novels do not contain the novelist's best work. The scenic machinery is lavish, and perhaps too profuse; we find examples of carelessness never formerly permitted. But the polished irony has almost reached perfection, and the style has gained certain excellences more specially characteristic of the experienced orator. The general tone remains unaltered; the habits of mind, though modified by public life, are not essentially transformed. We must recognize, with his latest and most appreciative critic, Froude, "the mellow and impartial wisdom which raises *Lothair* from an ephemeral novel into a work of enduring value."

The novels of Disraeli will always be read with interest for their graphic and detailed pictures of political affairs by one exceptionally qualified to describe them. His name should be held in honour among the makers of literature.

#### MAN AND CIRCUMSTANCE.

(FROM "VIVIAN GREY.")

"I wish I could think as you do," said Vivian; "but the experience of my life forbids me. Within only these last two years my career has, in so many instances, indicated that I am not the master of my own conduct; that, no longer able to resist the conviction which is hourly impressed on me, I recognise in every contingency the pre-ordination of my fate."

"A delusion of the brain," said Beckendorff, quickly. "Fate, destiny, chance, particular and special providence: idle words! Dismiss them all, sir! A man's fate is his own temper; and according to that will be his opinion as to the particular manner in which the course of events is regulated. A consistent man believes in destiny, a capricious man in chance."

"But, sir, what is a man's temper? It may be changed every hour. I started in life with very different feelings from those which I profess at this moment. With great deference to you, I imagine that you mistake the effect for the cause; for surely temper is not the origin, but the result of those circumstances of which we are all the creatures."

"Sir, I deny it. Man is not the creature of circumstances. Circumstances are the creatures of men. We are free agents, and man is more powerful than matter. I recognise no intervening influence between that of the established course of nature and my own mind. Truth may be distorted, may be stifled, be suppressed. The invention of cunning deceits may, and in most instances does, prevent man from exercising his own powers. They have made him responsible to a realm of shadows, and a suitor in a court of shades. He is ever dreading authority which does not exist, and fearing the occurrence of penalties which there are none to enforce. But the mind that dares to extricate itself from these vulgar prejudices, that proves its loyalty to its Creator by devoting all its adoration to His glory; such a spirit as this becomes a master mind, and that master mind will invariably find that circumstances are its slaves."

"Mr. Beckendorff, yours is a bold philosophy, of which I was once a votary. How successful in my service you may judge by finding me a wanderer."

"Sir! your present age is the age of error; your whole system is founded on a fallacy: you believe that a man's temper can change. I deny it. If you have ever seriously entertained the views which I profess; if, as you lead me to suppose, you have dared to act upon them, and failed; sooner or later, whatever may be your present conviction and your present feelings, you will recur to your original wishes and your original pursuits. With a mind experienced and matured, you may in all probability be successful; and then I suppose, stretching your legs in your easy chair, you will at the same moment be convinced of your own genius, and recognise your own destiny!"

"With regard to myself, Mr. Beckendorff, I am convinced of the erroneousness of your views. It is my opinion that no one who has dared to think can look upon this world in any other than a mournful spirit. Young as I am, nearly two years have elapsed since, disgusted with the world of politics, I retired to a foreign solitude. At length, with passions subdued, and, as I flatter myself, with a mind matured, convinced of the vanity of all human affairs, I felt emboldened once more partially to mingle with my species. Bitter as my lot had been, I had discovered the origin of my misery in my own unbridled passions; and, tranquil and subdued, I now trusted to pass through life as certain of no fresh sorrows as I was of no fresh joys. And yet, sir, I am at this moment sinking under the infliction of unparalleled misery; misery which I feel.



I have a right to believe was undeserved. But why expatiate to a stranger on sorrow which must be secret? I deliver myself up to my remorseless fate."

"What is grief?" said Mr. Beckendorff; "if it be excited by the fear of some contingency, instead of grieving, a man should exert his energies and prevent its occurrence."

## JERUSALEM BY MOONLIGHT.

(FROM "TANCRED.")

The broad moon lingers on the summit of Mount Olivet, but its beam has long left the garden of Gethsemane and the tomb of Absalom, the waters of Kedron and the dark abyss of Jehoshaphat. Full falls its splendour, however, on the opposite city, vivid and defined in its silver blaze. A lofty wall, with turrets and towers and frequent gates, undulates with the unequal ground which it covers, as it encircles the lost capital of Jehovah. It is a city of hills, far more famous than those of Rome; for all Europe has heard of Sion and of Calvary, while the Arab and the Assyrian and the tribes and nations beyond are as ignorant of the Capitolian and Aventine mounts as they are of the Malvern or the Chiltern Hills.

The broad steep of Sion crowned with the tower of David; nearer still, Mount Moriah, with the gorgeous temple of the God of Abraham, but built, alas! by the child of Hagar, and not by Sarah's chosen one; close to its cedars and its cypresses, its lofty spires and airy arches, the moonlight falls upon Bethesda's pool; farther on, entered by the gate of St. Stephen, the eye, though 'tis the noon of night, traces with ease the Street of Grief, a long winding ascent to a vast cupolaed pile that now covers Calvary; called the Street of Grief, because there the most illustrious of the human, as well as of the Hebrew race, the descendant of King David, and the divine son of the most favoured of women, twice sank under that burden of suffering and shame, which is now throughout all Christendom the emblem of triumph and of honour; passing over groups and masses of houses built of stone, with terraced roofs, or surmounted with small domes, we reach the hill of Salem, where Melchisedek built his mystic citadel; and still remains the hill of Scopus, where Titus gazed upon Jerusalem on the eve of his final assault. Titus destroyed the temple. The religion of Judea has in turn subverted the fanes which were raised to his father and to himself in their imperial capital; and the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob is now worshipped before every altar in Rome.

Jerusalem by moonlight! 'Tis a fine spectacle, apart from all its indissoluble associations of awe and beauty. The mitigating hour softens the austerity of a mountain landscape, magnificent in outline, however harsh and severe in detail; and while it retains all its sublimity, removes much of the savage sternness of the strange and unrivalled scene. A fortified city, almost surrounded by ravines, and rising in the centre of chains of far-spreading hills, occasionally offering, through their rocky glens, the gleams of a distant and richer land.

The moon has sunk behind the Mount of Olives, and the stars





J. H. Henson

in the darker sky shine doubly bright over the sacred city. The all-pervading stillness is broken by a breeze that seems to have travelled over the plain of Sharon from the sea. It wails among the tombs, and sighs among the cypress groves. The palm-tree trembles as it passes, as if it were a spirit of woe. Is it the breeze that has travelled over the plain of Sharon from the sea? Or is it the haunting voice of prophets mourning over the city that they could not save? Their spirits surely would linger on the land where their Creator had deigned to dwell, and over whose impending fate Omnipotence had shed human tears. From this mount! Who can but believe that, at the midnight hour, from the summit of the Ascension the great departed of Israel assemble to gaze upon the battlements of their mystic city. There might be counted heroes and sages who need shrink from no rivalry with the brightest and wisest of other lands; but the lawgiver of the time of the Pharaohs, whose laws are still obeyed; the monarch whose reign has ceased for three thousand years, but whose wisdom is a proverb in all nations of the earth; the teacher whose doctrines have modelled civilized Europe, the greatest of legislators, the greatest of administrators, and the greatest of reformers; what race, extinct or living, can produce three such men as these?

The last light is extinguished in the village of Bethany. The wailing breeze has become a moaning wind, a white film spreads over the purple sky, the stars are veiled, the stars are hid; all becomes as dark as the waters of Kedron and the valley of Jehoshaphat. The tower of David merges into obscurity, no longer glitter the minarets of the mosque of Omar, Bethesda's angelic waters, the gate of Stephen, the street of sacred sorrow, the hill of Salem, and the heights of Scopus can no longer be discerned. Alone in the increasing darkness, while the very line of the walls gradually eludes the eye, the church of the Holy Sepulchre is a beacon light.

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## CHAPTER X.

CHARLES ROBERT DARWIN.

Born 1809 A.D. . . . . Died 1882 A.D.

THOUGH not in any strict sense of the word a literary man, Darwin figures so prominently in the progress of the nineteenth century—his influence was established through the medium of books, and so largely modified almost everything written after the appearance of his first great work—that his name cannot be omitted from any comprehensive history of English literature.

*The Origin of Species and The Descent of Man,*

though directly concerned with the details of scientific research, established a revolution in thought which touches the deepest feelings of humanity, and have always been read widely by those not specially interested in their purely technical bearing. The Darwinian conception "came to the general world of unscientific readers with all the sudden vividness and novelty of a tremendous earthquake." They knew nothing or next to nothing of the impulses towards evolution (actually suggested by Darwin's own grandfather Erasmus, the poet) which had long been stirring the scientific world. The terms Darwinism and evolution are still usually regarded as synonymous, and the end of his great work is not yet fully accomplished. The universal acceptance of his theory must produce "for ever increasingly wide-reaching and complex effects in all our dealings with one another and with the environment at large."

The personality of Darwin was as unique and unassailable as his work; his circumstances were singularly propitious from the beginning. Inheriting, as we have seen, a genius for scientific speculation on the paternal side, he doubtless owed no less to his other famous grandfather, Josiah Wedgwood, the potter of Staffordshire. He was born on February 12, 1809, "in a cultivated scientific family, surrounded from his birth by elevating influences, and secured beforehand from the cramping necessity of earning his own livelihood by his own exertions." He was educated at Shrewsbury Grammar School, where he "collected everything;" went to Edinburgh University at sixteen; and ultimately passed, in 1828, to Christ's College, Cambridge, of which the atmosphere was fortunately congenial to the pursuit of science.

It was, indeed, to the recommendation of one of his university teachers, Professor Henslow, the well-known botanist, that Darwin owed his first opportunity of studying the wonders of the world, and of seeing for himself a large part of the entire globe. In the

autumn of 1831, when he was just twenty-two, Government determined to send out a 10-ton brig, the *Beagle*, for the purpose of completing certain unfinished surveys, mapping out untrodden 1831 shores, and carrying a chain of chronometrical A.D. measurements round the whole world. The commander, Captain Fitzroy, was a scientific officer, and anxious to be accompanied by a competent naturalist for the collection and preservation of whatever might be discovered on the voyage. Young Darwin, "grandson of the poet," was introduced, volunteered his services, and entered upon that epoch-making cruise, destined to occupy five years of his quiet life. He was enabled to catch a glimpse of "that rich, luxuriant, over-stocked hothouse of the tropics, in which the first great problems of evolution were practically worked out by survival of the fittest."

Neither then, nor at any period of his career, was Darwin either a narrow specialist or a rash speculator. He observed in every direction with scrupulous minuteness, and based the widest possible inferences upon recorded facts. But he was content to live in comparative silence and learned retirement for fifty years, and only published the first instalment of his reflections at the instigation of friends, twenty-three years after his return from the voyage which first determined their direction. His own words concerning *The Origin of Species* are clear and conclusive. "On my return home, it occurred to me in 1837 that something might be made out on this question by patiently accumulating and reflecting on all sorts of facts which could possibly have any bearing on it. *After five years' work*, I allowed myself to speculate on the subject, and drew up some short notes; these I enlarged in 1844 into a sketch of the conclusions that then seemed to me probable. From that period to the present day (1859) I have steadily pursued the same subject. I hope I may be excused for entering upon these personal details, as I give them only to



show that *I have not been hasty in coming to a conclusion.*"

In fact, Darwin was not ready for publication, by his own standard, in 1858. His hands were forced by a remarkable accident. Ten years before that date, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, then a young man of twenty-four, had gone out to study tropical life in the richest regions of the Malay Archipelago. He now sent home to Darwin, for presentation to the Linnæan Society, a striking memoir which proved to contain his own theory of natural selection, not worked out in detail, but complete in spirit and essence. Without a thought of self, the older naturalist sent it on at once to the president, Sir Charles Lyell. But Lyell knew what Darwin had been so many years preparing, and urged him to select a few salient 1858 passages from his own notes for immediate A.D. publication. These were accordingly read, with the memoir of Dr. Wallace, before the society on July 1, 1858.

The mutual attitude of the two discoverers affords a unique example of high-minded generosity. Darwin never claimed priority; Dr. Wallace waived his own claim to even a division of the honours. Each spoke always with admiration and appreciation of the other.

And the verdict of mankind, which practically gives Darwin exclusive credit for a great deal more than he actually either originated or established, is yet to a large extent justified by actual facts. He was by no means the first thinker to hold or to expound the cardinal doctrines of evolution. He did originate the grand idea of "natural selection," more popularly realized in Herbert Spencer's happy phrase, "the survival of the fittest;" and even this, as we have seen, was independently suggested by Dr. Wallace. But it was the untiring patience of Charles Darwin in accumulating and co-ordinating a vast store of facts, "all finely focussed with supreme skill upon the great principle he so clearly perceived, and so

lucidly expounded," that "forced an immediate acceptance of evolutionary ideas down the unwilling throats of half unthinking Europe."

There are certain obvious considerations which make Darwin's second great work, *The Descent of Man* (showing that our early ancestors must have been more or less monkey-like animals), even more interesting to the general public than *The Origin of Species*. It did not actually cause so much excitement on its publication in 1871, because the ground had been already prepared for its reception. But its ultimate importance to philosophy is in fact much more subtle and far-reaching. It reverses our conception, both of the past and of the future; its effects on every possible sphere of human energy are profound.

Darwin, of course, did a great deal of important work beyond the preparation of these two books. His *Naturalist's Voyage Round the World*, being the journal of five years on the *Beagle*, is no less entertaining than significant; and he issued several weighty treatises, advancing in detail the various conclusions to be deduced from his main theory. But he remains to the world the apostle of evolution, whose conspicuous and beautiful love of truth, whose fearlessness, modesty, and unfailing courtesy to opponents, have made "his name a rallying point for the children of light in every country"—a great man, to whom it was given to achieve greatness.

#### FROM "NATURALIST'S VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD."

Our voyage having come to an end, I will take a short retrospect of the advantages and disadvantages, the pains and pleasures, of our circumnavigation of the world. If a person asked my advice, before undertaking a long voyage, my answer would depend upon his possessing a decided taste for some branch of knowledge, which could by this means be advanced. No doubt it is a high satisfaction to behold various countries and the many races of mankind, but the pleasures gained at the time do not counterbalance the evils. It is necessary to look forward to a harvest, however distant that may be, when some fruit will be reaped, some good effected.

Many of the losses which must be experienced are obvious ; such as that of the society of every old friend, and of the sight of those places with which every dearest remembrance is so intimately connected. These losses, however, are at the time partly relieved by the exhaustless delight of anticipating the long wished-for day of return. If, as poets say, life is a dream, I am sure in a voyage these are the visions which best serve to pass away the long night. Other losses, although not at first felt, tell heavily after a period ; these are the want of room, of seclusion, of rest ; the jading feeling of constant hurry ; the privation of small luxuries, the loss of domestic society, and even of music and the other pleasures of imagination. When such trifles are mentioned, it is evident that the real grievances, excepting from accidents, of a sea-life are at an end. The short space of sixty years has made an astonishing difference in the facility of distant navigation. Even in the time of Cook, a man who left his fireside for such expeditions underwent severe privations. A yacht now, with every luxury of life, can circumnavigate the globe. Besides the vast improvements in ships and naval resources, the whole western shores of America are thrown open, and Australia has become the capital of a rising continent. How different are the circumstances to a man shipwrecked at the present day in the Pacific, to what they were in the time of Cook ! Since his voyage a hemisphere has been added to the civilized world.

If a person suffer much from sea-sickness, let him weigh it heavily in the balance. I speak from experience ; it is no trifling evil, cured in a week. If, on the other hand, he take pleasure in naval tactics, he will assuredly have full scope for his taste. But it must be borne in mind, how large a proportion of the time, during a long voyage, is spent on the water, as compared with the days in harbour. And what are the boasted glories of the illimitable ocean ? A tedious waste, a desert of water, as the Arabian calls it. No doubt there are some delightful scenes. A moonlight night, with the clear heavens and the dark glittering sea, and the white sails filled by the soft air of a gently-blowing trade-wind ; a dead calm, with the heaving surface polished like a mirror, and all still except the occasional flapping of the canvas. It is well once to behold a squall with its rising arch and coming fury, or the heavy gale of wind and mountainous waves. I confess, however, my imagination had painted something more grand, more terrific in the full-grown storm. It is an incomparably finer spectacle when beheld on shore, where the waving trees, the wild flight of the birds, the dark shadows and bright lights, the rushing of the torrents, all proclaim the strife of the unloosed elements. At sea the albatross and little petrel fly as if the storm were their proper sphere, the water rises and sinks as if fulfilling its usual task, the ship alone and its inhabitants seem the objects of wrath. On a forlorn and weather-beaten coast the scene is indeed different, but the feelings partake more of horror than of wild delight.

Let us now look at the brighter side of the past time. The pleasure derived from beholding the scenery and the general aspect of the various countries we have visited, has decidedly been the most constant and highest source of enjoyment. It is probable that the picturesque beauty of many parts of Europe exceeds anything which we beheld. But there is a growing pleasure in comparing the char-

acter of the scenery in different countries, which to a certain degree is distinct from merely admiring its beauty. It depends chiefly on an acquaintance with the individual parts of each view : I am strongly induced to believe that, as in music, the person who understands every note will, if he also possesses a proper taste, more thoroughly enjoy the whole, so he who examines each part of a fine view, may also thoroughly comprehend the full and combined effect. Hence, a traveller should be a botanist, for in all views plants form the chief embellishment. Group masses of naked rock even in the wildest forms, and they may for a time afford a sublime spectacle, but they will soon grow monotonous. Paint them with bright and varied colours, as in Northern Chile, they will become fantastic ; clothe them with vegetation, they must form a decent, if not a beautiful picture.

When I say that the scenery of parts of Europe is probably superior to anything which we beheld, I except, as a class by itself, that of the intertropical zones. The two classes cannot be compared together ; but I have already often enlarged on the grandeur of those regions. As the force of impressions generally depends on preconceived ideas, I may add, that mine were taken from the vivid descriptions in *The Personal Narrative of Humboldt*, which far exceed in merit anything else which I have read. Yet with these high-wrought ideas, my feelings were far from partaking of a tinge of disappointment on my first and final landing on the shores of Brazil.

Among the scenes which are deeply impressed on my mind, none exceed in sublimity the primeval forests undefaced by the hand of man ; whether those of Brazil, where the powers of Life are predominant, or those of Tierra del Fuego, where Death and Decay prevail. Both are temples filled with the varied productions of the God of Nature :—no one can stand in these solitudes unmoved, and not feel that there is more in man than the mere breath of his body. In calling up images of the past, I find that the plains of Patagonia frequently cross before my eyes ; yet these plains are pronounced by all wretched and useless. They can be described only by negative characters ; without habitations, without water, without trees, without mountains, they support merely a few dwarf plants. Why then, and the case is not peculiar to myself, have these arid wastes taken so firm a hold on my memory ? Why have not the still more level, the greener and more fertile Pampas, which are serviceable to mankind, produced an equal impression ? I can scarcely analyze these feelings ; but it must be partly owing to the free scope given to the imagination. The plains of Patagonia are boundless, for they are scarcely passable, and hence unknown ; they bear the stamp of having lasted, as they are now, for ages, and there appears no limit to their duration through future time. If, as the ancients suppose, the flat earth was surrounded by an impassable breadth of water, or by deserts heated to an intolerable excess, who would not look at these last boundaries to man's knowledge with deep but ill-defined sensations ?

Lastly, of natural scenery, the views from lofty mountains, though certainly in one sense not beautiful, are very memorable. When looking down from the highest crest of the Cordillera, the mind, undisturbed by minute details, was filled with the stupendous dimensions of the surrounding masses.

Of individual objects, perhaps nothing is more certain to create astonishment than the first sight in his native haunt of a barbarian—of man in his lowest and most savage state. One's mind hurries back over past centuries, and then asks, could our progenitors have been men like these?—men, whose very signs and expressions are less intelligible to us than those of the domesticated animals; men, who do not possess the instinct of those animal, nor yet appear to boast of human reason, or at least of arts consequent on that reason. I do not believe it is possible to describe or paint the difference between savage and civilized man. It is the difference between a wild and tame animal: and part of the interest in beholding a savage, is the same which would lead every one to desire to see the lion in his desert, the tiger tearing his prey in the jungle, or the rhinoceros wandering over the wild plains of Africa.

Among the other most remarkable spectacles which we have beheld, may be ranked the Southern Cross, the cloud of Magellan, and the other constellations of the southern hemisphere—the water-spout—the glacier leading its blue stream of ice, overhanging the sea in a bold precipice—a lagoon-island raised by the reef-building corals—an active volcano—and the overwhelming effects of a violent earthquake. These latter phenomena, perhaps, possess for me a peculiar interest, from their intimate connexion with the geological structure of the world. The earthquake, however, must be to every one a most impressive event: the earth, considered from our earliest childhood as the type of solidity, has oscillated like a thin crust beneath our feet; and in seeing the laboured works of man in a moment overthrown, we feel the insignificance of his boasted power.

It has been said, that the love of the chase is an adherent delight in man—a relic of an instinctive passion. If so, I am sure the pleasure of living in the open air, with the sky for a roof and the ground for a table, is part of the same feeling; it is the savage returning to his wild and native habits. I always look back to our boat cruises, and my land journeys, when through unfrequented countries, with an extreme delight, which no scenes of civilization could have created. I do not doubt that every traveller must remember the glowing sense of happiness which he experienced, when he first breathed in a foreign clime, where the civilized man had seldom or never trod.

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## CHAPTER XI.

ROBERT BROWNING.

Born 1812 A.D. . . . . Died 1889 A.D.

THE literary horizon of the nineteenth century is largely occupied by Tennyson and Browning. Born just three years later than the late Laureate, Browning died three years earlier. His first work, *Pauline*, was

issued in 1833, three years after the appearance of Tennyson's *Poems chiefly Lyrical*; and whereas the one sang out to Heaven on the threshold of death in his immortal *Crossing the Bar*, the other's "Epilogue" to *Asolando* proved him no less eager at life's end to "greet the Unseen with a cheer." During the same five or six decades both poets produced an almost continuous flow of work, marvellous alike in mass and quality.

Browning's gifts, of course, were much more tardily recognized than Tennyson's. He stood more apart from his fellows, and has never been so generally popular. But there are many who consider him the greater poet, and he was, in fact, no less truly the child of his age. For while Tennyson, sweet singer of progress, patriotism, and the love of man, was the acknowledged high priest of a complacent, liberal, scientific, peace-loving and prosperous civilization, Browning immortalized the keen intellectual curiosity, frank tolerance, and buoyant optimism so characteristic of our fathers' youth. His unique gift for presenting both sides of every question and revealing the whole process of an argument, shows unmistakably the influence of denials and scepticisms which were the very breath of his generation. Though his own personal convictions were unusually positive and definite, he never missed the subtlety of doubt.

From a good deal of not altogether profitable controversy on the poet's ancestors, there emerge a few established details of some interest. His grandfather married a Creole, Miss Tittle of St. Kitts, and his father was so dark as to have been once ordered by an officious beadle "to come out of the white folks' seats and sit with the coloured ones." He married a Miss Sarah Anne Weidemann, of mixed German and Scottish descent, herself a Peckham Dissenter; and Robert Browning was born to them in the parish of St. Giles, Camberwell, on May 7, 1812.

The lad grew up in humble surroundings, and was



educated at a local dissenting school until he was fourteen. After a short period of private tuition at home he went to University College for a year, and completed his training by travel. He is described as a bright, handsome lad, with long black hair falling over his shoulders. As Macready the actor said: "He looks and speaks more like a young poet than any one I have ever seen."

He apparently wrote poetry from a very early age, and never seems to have seriously considered the claims of any business or profession, though his father only held a small position in the Bank of England. One would imagine that the aunt who paid for the publication of *Pauline*, issued when he was twenty-one, must have been comparatively well off. This volume secured only one favourable notice, from W. J. Fox in the *Monthly Repository*; while the author and his sister deliberately destroyed the unsold copies. Browning himself declared that it was "written in pursuance of a foolish plan."

He spent part of 1834 in Russia, and during the next five years published three somewhat obscure but notable long poems. *Paracelsus* (1835) attracted the attention of Carlyle, Mill, Landor, and John Forster; the historical tragedy of *Strafford* (1837), based on the results of his studies for a prose life of Strafford in Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia*, was performed at Covent Garden by Macready; and Mrs. Carlyle is said to have read *Sordello* (1840) "with great interest," though she "wishes to know whether Sordello was a man, a city, or a book."

But his next venture was destined to establish his fame, at least with a few competent judges, as a real and original poet. From 1841 to 1846 appeared eight small volumes in yellow paper covers, printed in double columns, under the A.D. general title of *Bells and Pomegranates*—a phrase selected "to indicate an endeavour towards something like an alternation or mixture of music

with discoursing, sound with sense, poetry with thought."

This series includes such characteristic pieces as *The Glove*, *The Lost Leader*, *Good News*, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, *Cavalier Tunes*, besides the seven so-called dramas, *Pippa Passes*, in many ways the most poetical and dramatic of all his work; *King Victor and King Charles*; *The Return of the Druses*; *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*, produced at Drury Lane in February 1843; *Colombe's Birthday*, first staged by Helena Faucit and Barry Sullivan at the Haymarket in April 1853; *Luria*; and *A Soul's Tragedy*.

Now recognized, at least by all true lovers of literature, as a great poet, Browning met and married the poetess Elizabeth Barrett (in whose biography we have already narrated the somewhat troubled story of their wooing), and settled down to fifteen years uninterrupted happiness in Florence. A son (immortalized in Mrs. Browning's *Casa Guidi Windows*) was born on March 9, 1849, and a year later appeared Browning's most definitely Christian poem, *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*, which proves his faith unshaken by the scepticism of the age. Probably, however, *Men and Women*, issued in 1855, may be considered more popular. It includes the musical *Evelyn Hope*; *Fra Lippo Lippi* and *Andrea del Sarto*, two wonderful revelations of the artist soul; *Saul*; *The Last Ride Together*; and *One Word More*, the last being addressed to his wife.

In 1856 John Kenyon, the cousin who had introduced Miss Barrett to her husband, left her £4,000 and him £6,500, thus placing them above any anxieties in practical affairs. But Mrs. Browning only lived five years under these more comfortable circumstances, and on her death the poet left Italy for ever. After a short visit to Paris he settled in Warwick Crescent, London, near the Paddington Canal basin, that his twelve-year-old son might be under the eye of Miss Arabel Barrett.

Though unquestionably Browning's heart was buried with the wife whose genius was so strangely akin to his own, the loss never dimmed his faith or tamed the vigour and subtlety of his work. For another twenty-eight years he poured forth a mighty wave of song, which not only sustained but strengthened his claim to dwell among the few immortals of our literature.

*Dramatis Personæ* (1864) contained that vision of music, *Abt Vogler*, and *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, the optimist's confession, as well as *A Death in the Desert*, *Prospice*, and *James Lee*. Four years later came the epic, *The Ring and the Book*, an expression of the discovery that "no man ever lived upon this earth without possessing a point of view;" and this was quickly followed by *Balaustion's Adventure*, *Fifine at the Fair*, *Red-Cotton Nightcap Country*, and *Aristophanes's Apology*. The dramatic *Inn Album* came in 1875, followed by the miscellaneous volume *Pacchiarotto and how he worked in Distemper* (which contained *Hervé Riel*). His marvellous version of *The Agamemnon* of Æschylus, *La Saisiaz* (on the death of Miss Smith of Liverpool), and *The Two Poets of Croisic* occupied 1877 and 1878.

The last ten years of Browning's life saw the production of five more volumes, all rather slight in character, but as vigorous, skilful, and optimistic as any preceding them. The two series of *Dramatic Idylls* (1879 and 1880) include some of the poet's finest short pieces: *Jocoseria* (1883) contains *Ixion*; and *Ferishtah's Fancies* (1884) is no unworthy prelude to *Asolando*, which is famous for the immortal "Epilogue" already mentioned.

Until very recently, Browning was too often dismissed as needlessly obscure, and the daring originality of his language was condemned as unpoetical. But we know to-day that the difficulty, which is indeed seldom easy to surmount, of following his exact meaning does not arise from any want of clearness and decision in the poet's thought or from any wilfulness in expression. The explanation is rather

to be found in the intellectual subtlety of his brain, which probes fearlessly into every possible aspect of his subject, and the resolute accuracy of his language, which spares us no detail of the process. Whether concerned with thought or emotion, Browning will give us no easy summary of conclusions that have cost him so much labour. He will carry us with him along the stony track, flashing sidelights upon us at every turning, until we feel and think with him at every step. Verily, the poet's message becomes our own.

His rugged measures, fantastic rhymes, and startling grammatical perversions are similarly effective. By these words, so vigorously ordered (and by no others), can the singer convey his precise meaning with so much poetic force. After a time the lines haunt us no less persistently than others more simply musical. He is always eloquent and imaginative; while certain passages, designedly tuned in a more conventional key, bear witness to purely lyrical power of the highest order.

Browning chose to express many things usually considered to be outside the province of poetry, but he expressed them as a poet.

#### HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX.

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he ;  
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three ;  
" Good speed ! " cried the watch, as the gate-bolts undrew  
" Speed ! " echoed the wall to us galloping through ;  
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,  
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other ; we kept the great pace  
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place ;  
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,  
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,  
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,  
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting ; but while we drew near  
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear ;

At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see ;  
 At Düffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be ;  
 And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-chime,  
 So Joris broke silence with, " Yet there is time."

At Aerschot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,  
 And against him the cattle stood black every one,  
 To stare thro' the mist at us galloping past,  
 And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,  
 With resolute shoulders, each butting away  
 The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray :

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back  
 For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track ;  
 And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance  
 O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance !  
 And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon  
 His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned ; and cried Joris, " Stay spur !  
 Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,  
 We'll remember at Aix "—for one heard the quick wheeze  
 Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering knees,  
 And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,  
 As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,  
 Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky ;  
 The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,  
 'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff ;  
 Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,  
 And " Gallop," gasped Joris, " for Aix is in sight !"

" How they'll greet us !"—and all in a moment his roan  
 Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone ;  
 And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight  
 Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,  
 With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,  
 And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let fall,  
 Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,  
 Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,  
 Called my Roland his pet name, my horse without peer ;  
 Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or good,  
 Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

All I remember is, friends flocking round  
 As I sate with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground ;  
 And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,  
 As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,  
 Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)  
 Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

## PROSPICE.

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,  
The mist in my face,  
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote  
I am nearing the place,  
The power of the night, the press of the storm,  
The post of the foe ;  
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,  
Yet the strong man must go :  
For the journey is done and the summit attained,  
And the barriers fall,  
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,  
The reward of it all.

I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,  
The best and the last !  
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,  
And bade me creep past.  
No ! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers'  
The heroes of old,  
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears  
Of pain, darkness, and cold.  
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,  
The black minute's at end,  
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,  
Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,  
Then a light, then thy breast,  
O thou soul of my soul ! I shall clasp thee again,  
And with God be the rest !

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## CHAPTER XII.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON.

Born 1809 A.D. . . . . Died 1892 A.D.

NOT always has the Laurel been given to him most worthy of the honour ; but when Wordsworth died, there was none fitter to succeed “ the old man eloquent ” than the great Englishman who, until 1892, wore the wreath. In popular esteem, at least, Alfred Tennyson stood at the head of English poets in his generation. In his own department of literature he was the representative man of the age—caressed by critics, admired by all, imitated by not a few.



A Lincolnshire clergyman, rector of Somersby, had three sons—Frederick, Charles, and Alfred. All have written poetry, the third and greatest of the three being the late Laureate. Tennyson's poetic career may be said to have begun in 1827, when he joined his brother Charles in the publication of *Poems by Two Brothers*. Later, as an undergraduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, he won the Chancellor's medal for a poem in English blank verse upon the somewhat unpromising theme of *Timbuctoo*.

But in 1830 a bolder step was taken. A Cornhill publisher announced a modest volume, bearing 1830 on its title-page the words *Poems, chiefly A.D. Lyrical, by Alfred Tennyson*, in which such pieces as *Mariana in the Moated Grange*, *Clarel*, and *The Ballad of Oriana*, showed that a minstrel of brilliant promise was trying his 'prentice hand upon the lyre of English song.

Undaunted by the frigid reception of his first venture, Tennyson published a second volume in 1832, containing, beside corrected reprints of some former poems, many new compositions, which marked a striking advance both in thought and style. Those who then read for the first time *The Lady of Shalott*, *The Miller's Daughter*, *Ænone*, *The Lotus Eaters*, and, above all, *The Queen of the May*, an exquisite picture of a pretty wilful village girl fading away amid the brightening blossoms of an English spring, felt that a new well of poetic thought had burst out to gladden and make green the arid roads of modern life. One part of a poet's lofty mission is to battle with that tendency to the commonplace and the matter-of-fact which belongs to a money-getting age, by affording such nutriment to the imagination as may keep its fair shoots from withering away in the hot and dusty struggle of our daily lives. And no English poet of modern days has more nobly fulfilled this exalted function than he who has given us the sweet fruits of genius that have just been named.

The critics of 1832 were unkind and unjust to the youthful singer; and for nine years the sweet voice was silent. But it was not the silence of an idle life. *Locksley Hall* was unfolding its pathetic and passionate beauty. *The Gardener's Daughter* and *Dora* were budding into life. *Lady Clara Vere de Vere* was in preparation. And such fragmentary poems as *Morte d'Arthur* and *Godiva*, dealing with the chivalrous and feudal times of old England, were giving earnest of what the minstrel might do in some future day, should he choose his theme from that dim past, through whose mists we see in broken outline, with here and there a glimpse of brilliant colour shining through a rift, confused groups of giant men, whose life was summed up in the battle, the tilt-yard, the chase, and the carouse. When in 1842 appeared two volumes, containing the poems we have referred to, with many others of remarkable beauty, the victory was won. Another King A.D. Alfred was crowned in England, whose realm has wider bounds and whose sceptre has another power than the sceptre and the realm of the illustrious Saxon.

Tennyson's next work was published in 1847—a fanciful poem of the epic class, written in blank-verse, entitled *The Princess, a Medley*. At a little picnic on the grassy turf within a ruin, seven college men tell the tale in turn, and

“The women sang  
Between the rougher voices of the men,  
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind.”

A prince and princess are betrothed, but have never met. He loves the unseen beauty; she, influenced by two strong-minded widows, hates the thoughts of marriage, and founds a university for girls. Disguised in female dress, the prince and two friends don the academic robe of lilac silk, and mingle with the gentle undergraduates. All goes well—lectures

are duly attended—until upon a geological excursion the princess falls into a whirling river, and is snatched from the brink of a cataract by her lover. The secret being thus discovered, the pretenders are expelled, in spite of a life saved. Then comes war between the kingdoms ; the prince is struck senseless in the strife ; and as Ida, the Head of the College, moves round the sick-bed, where he lies hovering between life and death, a new light dawns upon her. She begins to feel that the gentle ministrations of home are a fitter study for her sex than the quadrature of the circle or the properties of amygdaloid. By degrees

“ A closer interest flourished up,  
Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to these,  
Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears  
By some cold morning glacier ; frail at first  
And feeble, all unconscious of itself,  
But such as gathered colour day by day.”

We never think of characterizing the poem by adjectives like “sublime” or “magnificent,” for it pretends to no such qualities as these express. “Exquisite,” “beautiful,” “graceful,” “tender” are rather the words we choose. A delicate playfulness runs through every page, like a golden thread through rich brocade. But with the sweet satiric touch there often mingles a tone of deep social wisdom, which exalts the poem far above mere prettiness. Some of the intervening lyrics are the perfection of word music, especially those lines descriptive of the dying echo of a bugle-note sounded amid the rocky shores of a lake.

Early in life a great sorrow had fallen upon Tennyson. Arthur Henry Hallam, the historian's son, who had been the poet's bosom friend at college and had been affianced to his sister, died in 1833 at Vienna. Stunned by the heavy blow, the surviving friend long refuses to be comforted ; the black shadow of the pall and the coffin brood upon his soul. But merciful time works its cure. The shadows turn

gray, are touched with light, and at last roll off in golden clouds. "The sad mechanic exercise" of weaving verses in memory of his dead companion restored the mourner to himself, and brought him back to take renewed pleasure in the days that pass. But the gaiety of youth was 1850 gone; the graver brow and somewhat saddened voice told of one who has drunk of that bitter cup which Infinite Wisdom often prepares to purify the soul. Such were the circumstances in which this work—the history of a human sorrow—was composed. Not until 1850 did the group of poems which, to the number of one hundred and twenty-nine, make up the tributary *In Memoriam*, appear in a printed volume. The stanza in which all are written is the well-known eight-syllabled quatrain; to which a very simple modification of rhyme, an exchange between the third and fourth lines, imparts an uncommon tone,—

"I hold it true whate'er befall;  
     I feel it when I sorrow most;  
     'Tis better to have loved and lost  
 Than never to have loved at all."

The lost friend, dying at Vienna, was borne to England, and buried in the chancel of Clevedon Church, in Somersetshire. How beautifully these circumstances are woven together in the following lines, which condense in their simple language the spirit of all the scenery round that lonely tomb:—

"The Danube to the Severn gave  
     The darkened heart that beats no more;  
     They laid him by the pleasant shore,  
 And in the hearing of the wave.

"There twice a day the Severn fills;  
     The salt sea-water passes by,  
     And hushes half the babbling Wye,  
 And makes a silence in the hills."

Tennyson's early life amid the fens of Lincolnshire and Cambridge led him to paint in his earlier poems

the features of such landscapes as are common there. The barren moor—the tangled water-courses, embroidered with brilliant flowering weeds—the great mere, shimmering in the frosty moonlight—the pool, fringed with tall sword-grass and bristling with bulrushes—meet us continually in his first volumes. But his manhood was spent in a different scene. At Farringford, in the Isle of Wight, on the road from Alum Bay to Carisbrook, he resided for many years, amid green undulating woodland, thick with apple trees, and fringed with silver sand and snowy rocks, on which the light-green summer sea and the black waves of winter flow with the changeful music of their seasons. The landscape of southern England, where green and daisied downs take the place of the gray wolds to which his young eyes were accustomed, is often painted in his later works. Within his quiet home by the sea the stalwart, dark-bearded poet lived among his children and his books, strolling often, no doubt, beyond the privet-hedge that bounded his lawn and garden, but seeing little society except that of a few chosen friends.

His *Ode on the Death of Wellington*, which is the chief work produced in his official capacity, 1854 though somewhat monotonous, sounds in many A.D. passages like the roll of the muffled drums that startle Nelson in his sleep beneath the pavement of St. Paul's, as the car of bronze bears a dead soldier to his side.

*Maud* and other poems were published by Tennyson in 1855. *Maud* is scarcely so fine a work as many that preceded it from the same pen. A squire's daughter, wooed by a new-made lord, prefers another gentleman, who is somewhat of the Byronic stamp. The serenade or invocation, sung by the lover as he waits at dawn for Maud among the roses and lilies in the Hall garden, after the guests of the evening have gone, is full of passionate fire and delicacy of thought. In the duel, which results from the dis-

covery of their meeting, Maud's brother is killed, and her sweetheart has to flee the land. The Crimean war is then hauled most incongruously into the dream—for it is now the dream of a dead man—and "the blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire," flaming from the cannon's mouth, lights up the concluding scene of a wild, ill-jointed tale, rich, however, in such splendours of English expression as few but Tennyson could produce.

This was followed by the Arthurian epic, of his longer poems undoubtedly the best. Turning his gaze back into that dim past from which he had already drawn one or two striking scenes, he reproduced the shadowy court at Caerleon, where King Arthur and his knights won their dusky-bright renown. He has succeeded admirably in setting before us the brilliant and the darker sides of that old and well-nigh forgotten life, A.D. 1859 in the four tales which form *The Idylls of the King*. The delicate Enid, riding in her faded silk before her cruel lord—the sweet and faithful Elaine gazing tenderly on the shield of her absent knight—the crafty beauty, Vivien, weaving her spells round old wizard Merlin to shear him of his strength, and shrieking, as the forked lightning splinters an oak hard by—and, finest picture of all, the guilty Queen Guinevere lying in an agony of remorse at the feet of Arthur, her tear-wet face crushed close to the convent door, and her dark, dishevelled hair floating in the dust, while the noble forgiveness of the injured King and his sad farewell pierce her to the very soul—these are the subjects of the song. The *Idylls* are in blank verse, whose fine polish and sweetly-varied music prove the Laureate to be a consummate master of that noble instrument in skilful hands—the English tongue.

In 1864 appeared *Enoch Arden*, a touching domestic story of humble life, together with *Aylmer's Field*, and some minor poems, of which the principal are



*Tithonus* and *The Northern Farmer*. In his later years Tennyson turned his attention to dramatic poetry. His *Queen Mary*, *Harold*, and *The Cup* 1864 show great skill in delineating character, and A.D. great power of working on the emotions; but they are better adapted for the study than for the stage. In 1884, Tennyson was raised to the peerage, with the title of Baron Tennyson. Death, foreshadowed in his immortal *Crossing the Bar*, came on October 6, 1892, in his eighty-fourth year.

## MEETING OF ENID AND GERAIN'T.

(FROM "THE IDYLLS OF THE KING.")

Then rode Geraint into the castle court,  
His charger trampling many a prickly star  
Of sprouted thistle on the broken stones.  
He looked, and saw that all was ruinous.  
Here stood a shattered archway, plumed with fern;  
And here had fall'n a great part of a tower,  
Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the cliff,  
And, like a crag, was gay with wilding flowers:  
And high above, a piece of turret stair,  
Worn by the feet that now were silent, wound  
Bare to the sun; and monstrous ivy-stems  
Claspt the grey walls with hairy-fibred arms,  
And sucked the joining of the stones, and looked  
A knot, beneath, of snakes,—aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle court,  
The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter, rang  
Clear through the open casement of the Hall,  
Singing: and as the sweet voice of a bird,  
Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,  
Moves him to think what kind of bird it is  
That sings so delicately clear, and make  
Conjecture of the plumage and the form;  
So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint,  
And made him like a man abroad at morn,  
When first the liquid note beloved of men  
Comes flying over many a windy wave  
To Britain, and in April suddenly  
Breaks from a coppice gemmed with green and red,  
And he suspends his converse with a friend,  
Or it may be the labour of his hands,  
To think or say, "There is the nightingale;"  
So fared it with Geraint, who thought and said,  
"Here, by God's grace, is the one voice for me."  
It chanced the song that Enid sang was one  
Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid sang:

“ Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and lower the proud ;  
 Turn thy wild wheel, through sunshine, storm, and cloud ;  
 Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

“ Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown  
 With that wild wheel we go not up or down ;  
 Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.

“ Smile, and we smile, the lords of many lands ;  
 Frown, and we smile, the lords of our own hands ;  
 For man is man, and master of his fate.

“ Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring crowd ;  
 Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the cloud ;  
 Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.”

“ Hark ! by the bird's song you may learn the nest,  
 Said Yniol ; “ enter quickly.” Entering then,  
 Right o'er a mount of newly-fallen stones,  
 The dusky-rafter'd, many-cobwebbed Hall,  
 He found an ancient dame in dim brocade ;  
 And near her, like a blossom vermeil-white,  
 That lightly breaks a faded flower-sheath,  
 Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk,  
 Her daughter.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

Born 1819 A.D. . . . . Died 1875 A.D.

CHARLES KINGSLEY, despite the not altogether unjust depreciations of pedantic criticism, remains one of the most brilliant and inspiring figures in early Victorian literature. The combination of entertainment and instruction, with an enthusiasm for sport, to be found in all his work produced a flavour which will always be peculiarly acceptable to the English public.

Born at Holne Vicarage, near Ashburton, on June 12, 1819, Kingsley took an honour degree at Cambridge (where he afterwards became Professor of History), and went as curate to Eversley, in Hampshire, immediately on his ordination. In the same parish, of which he became vicar in 1844, he remained till his death on January 23, 1875. For nine years, between

1860 and 1869, he held the professorship at Cambridge; he was appointed Canon of Chester in 1869, of Westminster in 1873. During 1871 he visited the West Indies.

It may therefore be said that, at least externally, his life was uneventful, though always professionally occupied. But though in most respects an ideal parish priest, and, moreover, peculiarly attached from the very depths of his nature to the particular district in which practically his whole life was spent, Kingsley's mind was scarcely at all infected by parochialism, and his interests were singularly varied.

Whatever might be passing through his mind was instantly put into words for the benefit of the public, occasionally before being carefully digested, in a pamphlet, a novel, or a poem; and, considering all things, his works may fairly be described as voluminous. The marvellous facility of his whole family for literary expression has only been realized of late years, now that the novels of Henry Kingsley have been revived. Dr. George H. Kingsley's *South Sea Bubbles by the Earl (of Pembroke) and the Doctor* points the way to his more famous daughter, Miss Mary H. Kingsley, the African traveller; "Lucas Malet," the novelist, is Mary St. Leger, second daughter of Charles himself; and her sister, Miss Rose Kingsley, writes on art and nature. There are other cousins who have published novels.

Charles Kingsley, theologically inspired by the somewhat mystical Frederick Denison Maurice, with vague reminiscences of Coleridge rhapsodies, and taking Carlyle as his master in letters, was at first very intimately associated with the Broad Church activity of his day, preached Christian Socialism, and founded what we call "muscular Christianity." To this period belong the essays, contributed over the signature of "Parson Lot," *Yeast* and *Alton Locke*, vigorous pictures of slavery in town and country, drawn from personal observation which, if somewhat exaggerated, are essentially true to life. The quiet manly religion

herein inculcated is "rather naked in the matter of formulæ," but essentially human and eternal. As Sandy Mackaye has it: "It's no my view o' human life that a man's sent into the world just to save his soul, an' creep out again."

When the Crimean War, as he fancied, had roused the wealthy to a sense of their responsibility, and when to him at least, the battle seemed less strenuous, he turned his thoughts to the past, and by a 1854  
marvellous power of rapidly assimilating im- A.D.  
pressions to a preconceived ideal, created three stirring and brilliant romances, which almost disarm the critic by their happy audacity and breathless animation.

The story of *Hypatia* (1853) is founded upon one of the most terrible of Christian traditions; but, on the other hand, it embraces an almost bewilderingly dramatic union of contrasts in manners and ideals, which is particularly inspiring to the romantic novelist. We are told that Kingsley did not represent the matter in very strict accord with facts; it is obvious that realism about the morality of the times would be impossible, but no one has ventured to question the general veracity of the picture. Its haunting colour and vivacity are altogether fascinating.

In *Westward Ho!* (1855) Kingsley painted, with scarcely less daring and impressiveness, the "spacious" times of good Queen Bess, on which all true Englishmen delight to dwell. The general reader, of course, is better informed here—more competent for judgment and comparison; but however the most modern culture may cavil at anachronisms or inaccuracies, the figure of Amyas Leigh must stand out pre-eminent, prince of adventurers, favourite of heroes; and the "noble Brotherhood of the Rose" remains a swan-song of English chivalry. Here more than anywhere, unless perhaps in Shakespeare, we may realize that worship of our "Maiden Queen" which inspired the foundation of the British Empire.

*Hereward the Wake* (1866) is equally patriotic, and no less stimulating. Records concerning "the last of the Saxons" are in the main legendary; and the critical surely have less ground of complaint against the novelist for selecting and arranging his material. However, the admixture of what is obviously intended for a historical picture with tales of magic armour and talking quadrupeds is somewhat confusing, and *Hereward the Wake* cannot be studied as a true memorial of our Saxon ancestors. Its style is seriously marred by the tasteless interpolation of modern smartness in dialogue which, fortunately, its author never attempted elsewhere.

In 1857, Kingsley issued *Two Years Ago*, his one novel of contemporary life. This is perhaps a little hysterical, but the adventures are as exciting as those of the historical romances, the characters as vivid, and the dramatic elements are conceived with equal vigour. It is perhaps less firm and coherent than *Alton Locke*, and less philosophical than *Yeast*; but it secures a place for its author among the writers of pure fiction.

There are certain qualities which may almost be called moral in all Kingsley's work, evincing a literary faculty of the highest kind. Always instructive without being exactly instructed, always argumentative without being very guarded in argument, he yet displays a marvellously contagious enthusiasm for his own creeds, and surrounds his own ideals with an atmosphere of passionate nobility. We forgive the partisanship for the sincerity of the partisan; we admire the hasty historian for the vividness of his impressions.

Moreover, Kingsley was a master in prose landscape painting, and never wanted another hand to "put in the figures." His characters are always strongly individualized; not merely living, but immortal. Concerning the details of style he is imitative, unequal, and given to tricks; but his vigorous personality would have mastered far more serious defects. Always

eloquent and vivid, his creative and descriptive powers, whether in conception or expression, were of such high order that only greater certainty of touch was needed to place him among the very first.

Kingsley also wrote a few admirable ballads and lyrics. His *Glaucus* (1854) is a charming study in popular natural history, and *The Water Babies* (1863) is a nursery classic.

### THE DEVIL'S LIMEKILN.

(FROM "WESTWARD HO!")

So on they went to the point, where the cyclopean wall of granite cliff, which forms the western side of Lundy, ends sheer in a precipice of some three hundred feet, topped by a pile of snow-white rock, bespangled with golden lichens. As they approached, a raven, who sat upon the topmost stone black against the bright blue sky, flapped lazily away, and sank down the abysses of the cliff, as if he scented the corpses underneath the surge. Below them from the gull-rock rose a thousand birds, and filled the air with sound; the choughs cackled, the hacklets wailed, the great black-backs laughed querulous defiance at the intruders, and a single falcon, with an angry bark, dashed out from beneath their feet, and hung poised aloft, watching the sea fowl which swung slowly round and round below.

It was a glorious sight upon a glorious day. To the northward the glens rushed down toward the cliff, crowned with grey crags, and carpeted with purple heather and green fern; and from their feet stretched away to the westward the sapphire rollers of the vast Atlantic, crowned with a thousand crests of flying foam. On their left hand, some ten miles to the south, stood out against the sky the purple wall of Hartland cliffs, sinking lower and lower, as they trended away to the southward along the lonely iron-bound shores of Cornwall, until they faded, dim and blue, into the blue horizon, forty miles away.

The sky was flecked with clouds, which rushed toward them fast upon the roaring south-west winds; and the warm ocean breeze swept up the cliffs, and whistled through the heather bells, and howled in cranny and in crag,

Till the pillars and clefts of the granite  
Rang like a God-swept lyre;

while Amyas, a proud smile upon his lips, stood breasting that genial stream of airy wine with swelling nostrils and fast heaving chest, and seemed to drink in life from every gust. All three were silent for a while; and Jack and Cary, gazing downward with delight upon the glory and the grandeur of the sight, forgot for a while that their companion saw it not. Yet when they started sadly, and looked into his face, did he not see it? So wide and eager



were his eyes, so bright and calm his face, that they fancied for an instant that he was once more even as they.

\* \* \* \* \*

Wondering, they set him down upon the heather, while the bees hummed round them in the sun; and Amyas felt for a hand of each, and clasped it in his own hand, and began,—

“When you left me there upon the rock, lads, I looked away and out to sea, to get one last snuff of the merry sea breeze, which will never sail me again. And as I looked I tell you truth, I could see the water and the sky, as plain as ever I saw them, till I thought my sight was come again. But soon I knew it was not so; for I saw more than man could see; right over the ocean, as I live, and away to the Spanish Main. And I saw Barbados, and Grenada, and all the isles that we ever sailed by; and La Guayra in Caraccas, and the Silla, and the house beneath it where she lived. And I saw him walking with her on the barbequ, and he loved her then. I saw what I saw; and he loved her; and I say he loves her still.

“Then I saw the cliffs beneath me, and the Gull rock, and the Shutter, and the Ledge; I saw them, William Cary, and the weeds beneath the merry blue sea. And I saw the grand old galleon, Will; she was righted with the sweeping of the tide. She lies in fifteen fathoms, at the edge of the rocks, upon the sand; and her men are all lying around her, asleep until the judgment day.”

Cary and Jack looked at him, and then at each other. His eyes were clear, and bright, and full of meaning; and yet they knew that he was blind. His voice was shaping itself into a song. Was he inspired? Insane? What was it? And they listened with awe-struck faces, as the giant pointed down into the blue depths far below, and went on.

“And I saw him sitting in his cabin, like a valiant gentleman of Spain; and his officers were sitting round him, with their swords upon the table, at the wine. And the prawns, and the cray-fish, and the rockling, they swam in and out above their heads; but Don Guzman he never heeded, but sat still, and drank his wine. Then he took a locket from his bosom; and I heard him speak, Will, and he said: ‘Here’s the picture of my fair and true lady; drink to her, senors, all.’ Then he spoke to me, Will, and called me, right up through the oar-weed and the sea: ‘We have had a fair quarrel, senor; it is time to be friends once more. My wife and your brother have forgiven me; so your honour takes no stain.’ And I answered, ‘We are friends, Don Guzman; God has judged our quarrel, and not we.’ Then he said, ‘I sinned, and I am punished.’ And I said, ‘And, senor, so am I.’ Then he held out his hand to me, Cary; and I stooped to take it, and awoke.”

### DOWN LEWTHWAITE CRAG.

(FROM “THE WATER BABIES.”)

A mile off, and a thousand feet down. So Tom found it; though it seemed as if he could have chucked a pebble on to the back of the woman in the red petticoat who was weeding in the garden, or even across the dale to the rocks beyond.

For the bottom of the valley was just one field broad, and on the other side ran the stream; and above it, grey crag, grey down, grey stair, grey moor, walled up to heaven.

A quiet, silent, rich, happy place; a narrow crack cut deep into the earth: so deep, and so out of the way, that the bad bogies can hardly find it out. The name of the place is Vendale; and if you want to see it for yourself, you must go up into the High Craven, and search from Bolland Forest north by Ingleborough, to the Nine Standards and Cross Fell; and if you have not found it, you must turn south, and search the Lake Mountains, down to Scaw Fell and the sea; and then if you have not found it, you must go northward again by merry Carlisle, and search the Cheviots all across, from Annan Water to Berwick Law; and then, whether you have found Vendale or not, you will have found such a country, and such a people, as ought to make you proud of being a British boy.

So Tom went to go down; and first he went down three hundred feet of steep heather, mixed up with loose brown gritstone, as rough as a file; which was not pleasant to his poor little heels, as he came bump, stump, jump, down the steep. And still he thought he could throw a stone into the garden.

Then he went down three hundred feet of limestone terraces, one below the other, as straight as if a carpenter had ruled them with his ruler and then cut them out with his chisel. There was no heath there, but—

First, a little grass slope, covered with the prettiest flowers, rockrose and saxifrage, and thyme and basil, and all sorts of sweet herbs.

Then bump down a two-foot step of limestone.

Then another bit of grass and flowers.

Then bump down a one-foot step.

Then another bit of grass and flowers for fifty yards, as steep as the house-roof, where he had to slide down on his dear little tail.

Then another step of stone, ten feet high; and there he had to stop himself, and crawl along the edge to find a crack; for if he had rolled over, he would have rolled right into the old woman's garden, and frightened her out of her wits.

Then, when he had found a dark narrow crack, full of green-stalked fern, such as hangs in the basket in the drawing-room, and had crawled down through it, with knees and elbows, as he would down a chimney, there was another grass slope, and another step, and so on, till—oh, dear me! I wish it was all over; and so did he. And yet he thought he could throw a stone into the old woman's garden.

At last he came to a bank of beautiful shrubs; whitebeam with its great silver-backed leaves, and mountain-ash, and oak; and below them cliff and crag, cliff and crag, with great beds of crown-ferns and wood-sedge; while through the shrubs he could see the stream sparkling, and hear it murmur on the white pebbles. He did not know that it was three hundred feet below.

You would have been giddy, perhaps, at looking down; but Tom was not. He was a brave little chimney-sweep; and when he found himself on the top of a high cliff, instead of sitting down and crying for his baba (though he never had had any baba to cry for), he said—"Ah, this will just suit me!" though he was very tired;

and down he went, by stock and stone, sedge and ledge, bush and rush, as if he had been born a jolly little black ape, with four hands instead of two.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### OTHER WRITERS OF THE NINTH ERA.

#### POETS.

MARY HOWITT (1799-1888) is perhaps best known for the remarkable extent to which she co-operated with her husband William (sometime editor of *The People's* and of *Howitt's Journal*) in literary work, neither sacrificing their individuality to their sympathy. Brought up among country surroundings in a Quaker family, Mrs. Howitt spent the earlier years of her married life in Nottingham, but afterwards settled nearer London, entertaining Tennyson and other literary notabilities. After her husband's death she lived entirely in Italy, and went over to the Church of Rome, declaring that "she was devoted to the Pope, and not to the papacy." She translated the earlier works of Hans Andersen; and possessing a fantastic imagination devoted to weird effects, is still well known for her exceedingly dainty verses for children. Always moral, and often directly humanitarian, her work yet never failed of being truly poetical.

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED (1802-1839), whose works were first authoritatively collected by the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, was a past master in the subtle art of writing *vers de société*. Until the age of nineteen he contributed copiously to *The Etonian*, making it one of the most brilliant school periodicals ever issued; and for many years later his influence on Charles Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*, to which De Quincey and Macaulay were then contributing, was almost as conspicuous. From 1830 until his death he was a member of Parliament, esteemed for his

skill in debate and other statesmanlike qualities. The epigrammatic humour of Praed's best work is quite irresistible. Its easy wit, its sparkling banter and felicity in rhyme, leave every rival or imitator far behind. Who that has read *My Own Araminta*, *The Red Fisherman*, and some other score of his best pieces can ever forget their unflagging vivacity.

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER (1803-1875) was a man of such determined unconventionality that "casual observers sometimes thought him crazy," yet he was peculiarly fitted for the missionary work which fell to his lot as vicar of the wild Cornish parish of Morwenstow, "where men and women stood in need not merely of Christianity but of elementary civilization." Twelve hours before his death he joined the Church of Rome; but the change is not perhaps altogether surprising in one surrounded throughout life by the atmosphere of saintly legend so graphically reflected in his best work. Despite his essential and almost startling manliness, Hawker was always at home in symbolism, and accepted without question any story which satisfied his imagination and confirmed his faith. His fine fragment, *The Quest of the Sangraal*, is based on a conception of the quest as "a real and grand culmination of spiritual vitality," very foreign to Tennyson's treatment of the same theme; while in idealizing Henry of Exeter, "he seizes at once upon the one poetical aspect of that remarkable prelate's career." Hawker's faith was childlike and implicit, as his style is *spontaneously* simple and vigorous. He "writes as the early Christian painters worked," and his writings will live.

FREDERICK TENNYSON (1807-1898), though necessarily overshadowed by his greater brother, was a poet of fine imagination and much originality. Borrowing little or nothing, his genius had yet so much affinity in spirit and form with the Laureate's that it has never been very widely recognized. Indeed, the sense of "absurdity in entering the literary lists, as

though he were suddenly possessed of a feeling of rivalry of his brother," probably co-operated with a naturally retiring nature to curb his "worldly ambition or love of glory." His first volume, *Days and Hours*, did not appear till 1854, and though others were privately printed in Jersey in 1870, for the convenience of final revision, it was twenty-six years later that the present Lord Tennyson saw through the press his *Isles of Greece*, while *Daphne* and other poems appeared in 1891. A poet whose most serious works were given to the world in his seventy-fourth and seventy-fifth years can never be said to have courted popularity; and Frederick Tennyson, though educated at Eton and Cambridge, "rather separated himself from England and English literature" by his long residence abroad and his final settlement in Jersey. It is improbable that he would attach much value to appreciation from other than students, by whom he will always be held in respect.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER (1808-1879), also an older brother of the Laureate's, having only taken the name with the estate of his great-uncle, Samuel Turner of Caistor, in 1838, owes the more independent reputation which he certainly achieved to what may almost be termed an accident. He naturally expressed himself, almost exclusively, in a form which has long afforded a favourite topic with the critics, and must always loom largely among the subjects presented to students of English literature. The mere fact that Shakespeare's *Sonnets* do not fall in line with the purer Petrarchan form has produced much, somewhat pedantic, literature on this most fascinating of poetical exercises, and one who wrote as many sonnets as Charles Tennyson can never be altogether neglected in our most elementary text-books. Charles Tennyson, in fact, was not more frequently "irregular" than many of our greatest sonneteers. His limitations arise rather from an excess of fluency in "the form which he had so persistently cultivated, leading



THE ROAD TO CAMELOT.

*From the picture by G. Broughton, R.A., in Liverpool Art Gallery.*





to carelessness in phrase and rhyme, and from an unfortunate tendency to somewhat crude moralizing. He was an ideal parish clergyman, and the slighter details of his calling are given undue prominence in his work :—

“ Poet and Priest alike, in neither least,  
In both complete, though far too meek to know it,  
For not the Poet’s sweetness lacks the Priest,  
And not the Priestly holiness the Poet.”

But his sustained beauty of phrase and graceful simplicity are sufficient to conquer worse faults in technical workmanship than he ever committed ; and we can only echo Coleridge’s famous declaration that “ a large proportion of these sonnets stand between Wordsworth’s and Southey’s, and partake of the excellences of both.”

EDWARD FITZGERALD (1809–1883) is best known as the translator of Omar Khayyam, the Persian astronomer-poet of the eleventh century. But Fitzgerald was more than a translator. He contrived to imbue himself with the spirit of the original, and though he made many alterations, he yet presented the effect of the Persian verses. Indeed, owing to Fitzgerald’s genius, Omar to-day is read in England as much as any and more than most native poets. Fitzgerald was a great letter-writer in an age when the art of letter-writing was dying out. His correspondence has been collected in several volumes.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM (1811–1833) must always be associated with the immortal friendship which inspired *In Memoriam*, the most glorious tribute ever paid to the beloved dead. But Hallam was also a son of the celebrated historian, and actually produced, in the too short twenty-two years of a not unhappy life, a body of work, in prose and verse, which showed very remarkable promise, and is worthy to be remembered on its own merits. The poems, originally designed for publication with some of Tennyson’s, are singularly mature, self-restrained, lucid, simple, and concen-

trated. He seems, even at that early age, to have learnt the secret of suggestion by reserve in language, and some of his melodies are almost perfect. Of that which he would attain he was already secure.

AUBREY DE VERE (1814-1902), like his father—Sir Aubrey de Vere—is most widely known as a writer of sonnets; but many of his idylls show a remarkably true feeling for Greek mythology, and he also possessed considerable dramatic power. But the most marked quality of his work and his character is “spiritual serenity.” An ardent disciple of Wordsworth, and an intimate friend of Tennyson, Aubrey de Vere found peace in the Church of Rome; and maintained, amid an atmosphere of strain and unrest, that settled and tranquil faith which at once becomes and inspires a writer of religious or legendary verse. Though at times unquestionably diffuse, he had a good command of poetic methods, and knew how to be simple and sincere without being bald.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY (1816-1902) will always be known as the author of one poem, more popular in America than in England, and probably less read every year on both sides of the water. But *Festus* should not be altogether forgotten. Bailey was dedicated to poetry from his earliest youth; he laboured continuously for three years before publication at his great work, and lived to issue a jubilee edition, more finished and better proportioned than the original. It is, in fact, a living poem, not unworthy of what its author has declared the study of his life—

“To have done his best to favour a simple creed which comprises in its consecrated elements a belief in the benignant providence of God, in the immortality of the soul, in the harmonized gospel of faith and reason combined, and in the just, discriminative, and equitable judgment of the spirit after death by Deity.”

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES (Lord Houghton).—(1809-1885)—London—politician—*Poems of Many Years: Palm Leaves; Life of Keats.*

MARTIN FARQUHAR TUPPER.—(1810-1889)—London—barrister—*Proverbial Philosophy; An Author's Mind; The Crock of Gold.*

WILLIAM EDMONSTOUNE AYTOUN.—(1813-1865)—professor of Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres in Edinburgh University—*Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*, etc. In collaboration with Sir Theodore Martin, *Ballads by Bon Gaultier*, and a translation of the lyrics of Goethe.

SIR THEODORE MARTIN, K.C.B.—(1816-1909)—knighted 1880—*The Life of the Prince Consort*; and biographies of Professor Aytoun, Lord Lyndhurst, and his own wife, Helena Faucit, the well-known actress, the authoress of a book on *Some of Shakespeare's Female Characters*. In collaboration with Professor Aytoun, *Ballads by Bon Gaultier*, and a translation of the lyrics of Goethe.

ELIZA COOK.—(1818-1889)—*Lays of a Wild Harp*, etc.

#### NOVELISTS.

FREDERICK MARRYAT (1792-1848) was a naval captain who, though chiefly known as a writer for boys, had literary merits beyond those essential to success in mere stories of adventure. He has left us pictures of seafaring life during the early nineteenth century which are unrivalled for vigour and verisimilitude; his narratives are graphic and absorbing; and many of his characters stand out by their vivid and original personality. *Masterman Ready*, though not quite a second *Robinson Crusoe*, is far superior to most such imitations, and the neglected *Pacha of Many Tales* will lose little by comparison with its acknowledged model, *The Arabian Nights*. *Peter Simple*, *Jacob Faithful*, *Midshipman Easy*, and the rest can never be forgotten by any who love a really good yarn.

DOUGLAS WILLIAM JERROLD (1803-1857) was an actor's son. Having spent two years at sea, and worked for some time as a printer, he entered literary life as a writer for the Coburg Theatre. *Black-eyed Susan* is his most popular play, though *Time Works Wonders* is perhaps the best. However, Jerrold's fame rests rather upon his contributions to *Punch* and other serials, notably *Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures*. Such works as *St. Giles and St. James* and *The Story of a Feather* display his power as a novelist. For some years before his death he edited *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*. His son Blanchard held a similar position.

EDWARD GEORGE EARLE LYTTON BULWER (first Baron Lytton of Knebworth)—(1803–1873)—was a man of great versatility. His earliest productions were the novels *Falkland*, *The Disowned*, *Devereux*, and *Pelham*, which is by far the best. These were followed by *Paul Clifford* and *Eugene Aram*, stories which made heroes of highwaymen and murderers, and created a false sympathy for the vicious and criminal. Not to be confounded with the “Newgate novels” are *Night and Morning* and *Lucretia*, powerful studies of criminals. The historical romances are now perhaps more popular—*The Last Days of Pompeii*, *Rienzi*, *Harold*, *The Last of the Barons*, and the unfinished *Parisians*. *Zanoni* also has some claims to be included among the historical novels, but is pre-eminently a tale of mystery—an imaginary record of the searchers after truth, members of the society of which the ancient Rosicrucians were but a youthful branch. In *A Strange Story* he advanced a step further. The mystery is well kept up; the style is more restrained; the characters are more natural. This tale, in its turn, was eclipsed by *The Coming Race*, a brilliant effort of the imagination that has always been read with interest, and will not easily be forgotten. This, and the short *Haunted and the Haunters*, a tale of mystery worthy to rank him with Poe, and probably the best ghost story ever written by an English author, constitute a considerable portion of Lytton’s claim to remembrance. The last group consists of “domestic novels,” in which are given simple pictures of upper middle class families—*The Caxtons*, *My Novel*, *What will he Do with It?* and *Kenelm Chillingly*. Besides novels, he wrote poems, social criticism, essays, and pamphlets, most of which are forgotten; satires, such as *The Siamese Twins* and *The New Timon*; and plays, including *The Lady of Lyons* and *Richelieu*, which, by virtue of their dramatic qualities, still hold the stage. He also made his mark in Parliament, and rose to be Secretary of State for the Colonies in Lord Derby’s

first ministry. He was raised to the peerage in 1866.

GEORGE BORROW (1803-1881) acquired popularity under circumstances almost unique in literature. Having travelled in Spain as an agent of the Bible Society, he incorporated a most fascinating series of adventurous experiences in a book not very appropriately called *The Bible in Spain* (1843). The title, and the circumstances of its conception, secured it an entry to circles not addicted to novel reading, and placed it among the few volumes to be opened on Sunday by the most strict observers. It would be impossible to calculate how many a healthy-minded boy and girl has blessed George Borrow for the jam so cunningly inserted within that most respectable and respectably-christened pill—his record of missionary labours. Of more recent years a literary cult has set the fashion towards Borrow's other no less delightful works—*Lavengro*, *Romany Rye*, and *Wild Wales*. Though garrulous and discursive, he is always sincere and entertaining. His wonderfully intimate acquaintance with the customs and the ideals of gipsies constitutes a great part of his peculiar charm.

CHARLES JAMES LEVER (1806-1872) is the national Irish novelist, though he is by no means popular with his fellow-countrymen, who complain that he has done much "to perpetuate the current errors as to Irish character." The charge is not well founded. It is true that Lever laughed at his countrymen's foibles, but he laughed good-humouredly. He was at his best when describing the life of men who drank deep, rode hard, gamed heavily, fought bravely, and led a careless existence. But he also wrote truly and well of the wretched state of the peasantry, and with no unskilful hand portrayed the pitiful position of the decayed Irish gentleman. All Lever's earlier stories may be grouped together. Early in 1837 he contributed to *The Dublin University Magazine* some gossip chapters, which, with additions, were afterwards published



as *The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer*. He at once achieved a certain renown; but he still continued to practise as a doctor. Soon, however, he took up his pen again, and wrote *Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon*, which placed him among the popular writers of fiction of the day. This he followed with *Jack Hinton, the Guardsman*, *Tom Burke of Ours*, *Arthur O'Leary*, *The O'Donoghue*, and *The Knight of Gwynne*. All these books lack plot, but there is a great variety of scenes and graphic descriptions, while the characters are bright, the interpolated "yarns" excellent, and the whole has a superabundance of animal spirits. Humour was his forte rather than pathos, and his stories were wanting in scenes of touching and pathetic interest. Always in need of money, he wrote much and wrote quickly. The books of his second period—many written when he was consul at Trieste—differ considerably from those of his earlier years. The construction is better, the characters are more carefully drawn, and the author's greater experience of life shows itself throughout; but the anecdotes are fewer, there are no songs, and the dashing heroes, the rollicking officers, and the jolly proverbs have disappeared. *Roland Cashel* shows the author in a state of transit between the two manners. In *The Fortunes of Glencore*, which followed, he reaches the later style. *Davenport Dunn* is good; and he is at his best in *The Dodd Family Abroad*, a story unfolded in a series of letters written by members of an average middle-class Irish family, with no special gifts and few special opportunities for observation, who have gone to the Continent with crude and ridiculous notions of what awaited them there.

ELIZABETH CLEGHORN STEVENSON (afterwards Mrs. Gaskell) (1810–1865), though just below the highest rank of "great" novelists, almost achieved that distinction in one book, and maintained a secondary position by several quite admirable stories of English life. Her *Cranford* is one of the precious gems of literature

Though slightly resembling, in style and subject, the perfect miniatures of Jane Austen, it has certain qualities denied to the authoress of *Persuasion*, and remains unrivalled in its own peculiar charm. As a work of art it is almost flawless. As a picture of the early Victorian gentlewoman of village life it stands alone. In *Mary Barton* and *North and South*, Mrs. Gaskell described the working-classes of her age with true womanly sympathy ; while the unfinished *Wives and Daughters* must always appeal strongly to lovers of healthy domestic romance.

CHARLES READE (1814-1884) wrote nearly a score of novels, more than half of which are quite forgotten, though some appeared in the 'eighties. Reade was from the first attracted by the theatre, and it was his desire to become a dramatist. As a matter of fact, he adapted, translated, or (nearly always) wrote in collaboration no less than thirty-five plays, of which number twenty-five have been produced. Of these, *Nance Oldfield* (a version of *Tiradaté*), *Drink* (an adaptation of Zola's *L'Assommoir*), and *Masks and Faces*, still hold the boards to-day. *Drink* is a horrible, realistic drama, without any artistic signification ; *Nance Oldfield* is delightful ; and *Masks and Faces* is a charming comedy. Though he devoted much of his time to play-writing, he never mastered the technique of the stage, and he has not enriched the literature of the drama with a single piece written by himself. *Peg Woffington* (1852), founded upon *Masks and Faces*, was his earliest novel. This was followed in the next year by *Christie Johnstone*, a short story, which shows many of the qualities that in another book made its author famous. *It is Never too Late to Mend* (1856) was a novel the purpose of which was to expose the cruelties suffered by the inmates of prison. It is painful reading, and there is reason to believe that Reade exaggerated, perhaps in order to draw attention to the grievance. He certainly succeeded in his object. But the novels that preceded and succeeded *The Cloister*

*and the Hearth* (1861) were but as dross to gold. It is by virtue of this historical romance that Reade takes his place among the great writers of fiction. The book is a magnificent survey of the manners and customs of Holland and France, and Germany and Italy, at the end of the fifteenth century. It is always interesting with its human plot and the splendidly drawn characters. Elsewhere Reade showed himself tender-hearted, loathing cruelty, hating abuse; now he revealed himself as an idealist. His great fault of striving after "situations" and other theatrical effects, which spoilt so many of his works, is in this book scarcely noticeable. It is almost the only one of his novels which he did not afterwards dramatize. Every page displays ripe scholarship and immense knowledge, yet nowhere is it laboured, and the better informed the reader the more amazed and impressed he is by the truthfulness of the picture. The more important of Reade's later books are *Hard Cash* (1863), dealing with the dangers of private lunatic asylums; *Griffith Gaunt* (1866), a clever but unpleasant tale; and *Foul Play* (1869), which exposes the methods by means of which dishonest shipowners contrived to rob the insurance companies.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE (1815-1882) has been unduly neglected by modern readers. Trollope brought this fate in great part upon himself by declaring too ostentatiously that he wrote only for money, and found his reward in the pecuniary result of his labours. All authors write for money; but if they are worthy of their salt, they usually take pleasure in their work. The public likes to think of the man of letters as invested with some romance, and it was disgusted to learn that Trollope wrote methodically from half-past five until half-past eight every morning, and that every morning he wrote the same number of words. In spite of his methods, however, Trollope was no mere book-maker; and his books, with quaint Miss Austen-like touches, though not of the highest, are of a high

order. He had a rare pathos and a quiet humour that vented itself not so much in dialogue as in the delineation of characters. His novels were not remarkable for plot; but he contrived to present certain social circles of his own time in a manner that leaves little to be desired. He was happiest when describing clerical society in cathedral towns, as in *The Warden*, *Barchester Towers*, *Doctor Thorne*, *Framley Parsonage*, etc. Trollope was the son of Frances, who, though she did not begin to write until she was fifty years of age, published nearly six score volumes in twenty years. He was educated at Harrow and Winchester, and entered the General Post Office in 1834 as a clerk, at a salary of £90 a year. He remained in the Civil Service until 1867. The history of these years may be read in his novel, *The Three Clerks*. On Post Office business he travelled a good deal, and he described the countries he visited in *The West Indies and Spanish Main*, and *North America*. His *Autobiography* appeared posthumously.

EMILY JANE BRONTË (1818-1848) has been proclaimed by many responsible critics a greater genius than her more popular sister, Charlotte. But she wrote only one novel and a few poems, of which the former is so harsh and forbidding, and in a certain sense so barren and limited, that we cannot marvel at the general verdict. *Wuthering Heights*, however, is not untrue to nature. It is a faithful echo, saving its morbidity, of her own wild moorland. It is instinct with imagination; the persons are human, vivid, and passionate.

ANNE BRONTË (1820-1849), the youngest of the three, is no more than a faint replica of her brilliant sisters. Her gentle, suffering nature could only record her own experiences. *Agnes Grey* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* have no life.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

GEORGE ROBERT GLEIG.—(1796-1888)—*The Subaltern*; *The Chelsea Pensioners*, etc.

GEORGE PAYNE RAINSFORD JAMES.—(1799-1860)—sometime British

consul at Norfolk (Virginia, U.S.A.), and afterwards at Venice—historical novelist—*Richelieu*, etc.

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH.—(1805–1882)—proprietor and editor of *Bentley's Miscellany*—historical and “Newgate” novelist—*The Tower of London*; *Old St. Paul's*; *Windsor Castle*; *Jack Sheppard*; *Rookwood*, etc.

SAMUEL WARREN.—(1807–1877)—*Passages from the Diary of a late Physician*; *Ten Thousand a Year*.

THOMAS MAYNE REID.—(1818–1883)—captain in United States army—*The Boy Hunters*; *The Scalp Hunters*, etc.

#### DRAMATISTS.

JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES (1784–1862), the son of an Irish teacher of elocution, was taken up as a lad by Hazlitt, and further encouraged by Coleridge and Lamb. He began life as an actor, and spent some years teaching at Belfast, writing the while operas, plays, and poems which attracted little attention. His first success was *Caius Gracchus*, which appeared in 1815, and was soon followed by *Virginius*. Macready's performance of this piece made the dramatist's fortune. During the next twenty-three years Knowles maintained his reputation in *William Tell*, *The Beggar of Bethnal Green*, *The Hunchback*, *The Love Chase*, and other popular plays, for many of which he himself took the leading part. He wrote two novels, and, himself a Baptist lay preacher, attacked Catholicism by voice and pen. Knowles wrote his play after the manner of the Elizabethans, particularly Massinger, and was not always entirely successful in concealing his model.

SIR THOMAS NOON TALFOURD (1795–1854), though educated for the law, and rising to a seat on the Bench, will always be remembered by his *Ion*, and by his interesting *Life of Charles Lamb*. He wrote other powerful dramas, *The Athenian Captive*, *The Massacre of Glencoe*, and *The Castilian*.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR (1800–1886) was an accomplished writer, whose *Philip Van Artevelde* (1834) is still read. This stately drama is founded on the history of the famous brewer of Ghent, and its author also published the historical *Edwin the Fair*, as well as several poems and essays.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

GILBERT ABBOTT & BECKETT.—(1811-1856)—London magistrate—many plays; also *Comic Blackstone*; *Comic Histories of England and Rome*.

TOM TAYLOR.—(1817-1880)—dramatic critic to *The Times*—editor of *Punch*—many comedies and farces; *Autobiography of B. R. Haydon*.

JOHN WESTLAND MARSTON.—(1819-1890)—*Heart of the World*; *Patrician's Daughter*, etc.

## ESSAYISTS.

ANNA BROWNELL JAMESON (1794-1860) was the daughter of Murphy the painter. Two handbooks, descriptive of the Public and Private Galleries of London, were written by this accomplished woman. But her most noted works are *Characteristics of Shakespeare's Women*, containing an estimate as just as it is beautiful, *Sacred and Legendary Art*, *Legends of the Monastic Orders*, and *Legends of the Madonna*.

HARRIET MARTINEAU (1802-1876), whose clever popularizations of knowledge and philosophy cannot satisfy the modern demand for accurate scholarship, was a writer of enormous and beneficial influence on her generation. Her object in life was "the cultivation of her intellectual powers, with a view to the instruction of others by her writings." She prepared competent abstracts or illustrative tales of philosophy, wrote up political measures, and published interesting descriptions of foreign lands. No less industrious and sincere in forming her opinions than she was lucid and concise in their expression, Miss Martineau was a model journalist, who showered material benefits on a grateful public. Her personal character, though freely criticized after her frank avowals of a borrowed enthusiasm for Comte, emerges from the mist of contemporary misunderstanding as that of a singularly high-minded, affectionate and devotional woman. She was in every way pre-eminently typical of the age she helped to mould. Her admirable *Playfellow* series is a nursery classic.



DR. JOHN BROWN (1810-1882) belongs to a group of writers perhaps the smallest but certainly the best beloved in English literature. Once, or maybe twice, in a century there appears among us a "chiel takin' notes" about everything in general and nothing in particular—a miscellanist, as we must call him, for want of an apt definition, whose personal graces of style are destined to charm away the heart of the world. Charles Lamb, surely, is our king of miscellanists, and R. L. Stevenson stands close beside the throne. But in 1858 "a Scotch physician of the name of Brown" published a volume of medical and other essays, entitled *Horæ Subsecivæ*, containing at least one literary masterpiece. The immortal *Rab and His Friends* revealed a stylist of the first order, fresh, picturesque, and engaging. Dr. Brown's delicate humour and fine humanity have been many times combined with an almost equally happy effect—Scott's Pet Marjorie being perhaps the favourite among his sketches of character—and he is already a classic. A volume of his charming *Letters* was published in 1907.

MARK PATTISON (1813-1884) was said to be the best-read man in Oxford and published important volumes on Isaac Casaubon and Milton, besides essays on religious and literary subjects. He also edited Pope and Milton. Though somewhat cynical in manner, he was always a thoughtful and suggestive critic, more intellectual than emotional.

GEORGE BOOLE (1815-1864) was a mathematician and logician of considerable repute, best known by his *Laws of Thought* (1854). He had a very wide influence on logical speculation, being practically the inventor of "Symbolic Logic," and having materially expanded the doctrine of Probability. He received only a slight education, beginning to teach at the age of sixteen, and opening a school of his own before he was twenty. But for the greater part of his life he was professor of Mathematics at Queen's College, Cork. His work was afterwards elaborated and systematized by Jevons.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

ABRAHAM HAYWARD.—(1801-1884)—barrister—*Biographical and Critical Essays ; Whist, and Whist-Players ; The Art of Dining.*

JOHN STERLING.—(1806-1844)—curate at Hurstmonceaux—*Essays in Athenæum and Blackwood ; Poems ; Strafford* (a tragedy).

MARY VICTORIA COWDEN-CLARKE.—(1809-1898)—Miss Novello—*Complete Concordance to Shakespeare ; Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines.*

GEORGE HENRY LEWES.—(1817-1878)—founder and editor of *The Fortnightly Review*—critic and essayist, novelist, dramatist, biographer—*The History of Philosophy from Thales to Comte ; Problems of Life and Mind ; On Actors and the Art of Acting ; Life and Works of Goethe ; Life of Robespierre, etc.*

GEORGE BRIMLEY.—(1819-1857)—Cambridge—Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge—*Essays in The Spectator and Fraser's Magazine.*

## HISTORIANS.

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE (1818-1894), an ex-Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, was the distinguished author of a graphic and eloquent *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Armada* (1856-1870). In this work the character and the actions of King Henry the Eighth are set in a more favourable light than in previous histories of his reign. Mr. Froude edited the *Letters* and posthumous papers of Thomas Carlyle.

HENRY THOMAS BUCKLE (1821-1862) was the author of a remarkable *History of Civilization in England*, in which he endeavoured to trace the development of national intellect. He devoted patient attention, and marshalled an array of evidence in support of his views that tells of deep and long research. He follows Comte, the French author of *Positive Philosophy*, in his general views.

EDWARD AUGUSTUS FREEMAN (1823-1892) was a student of history from 1845, when he became a Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford. In 1884 he became Professor of Modern History at Oxford. His chief works are, *History of the Norman Conquest*, and a sequel to it entitled *The Reign of William Rufus*.

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### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- AGNES STRICKLAND.—(1796-1874)—Reydon Hall, Suffolk—*Lives of the Queens of England; Lives of the Queens of Scotland*. Her sister ELIZABETH aided her in these works.
- ROBERT CHAMBERS.—(1802-1871)—Peebles—*Traditions of Edinburgh; History of the Rebellion of 1745-46; Vestiges of Creation; Domestic Annals of Scotland*.
- PHILIP HENRY, EARL STANHOPE.—(1805-1875)—Walmer—formerly Lord Mahon—*History of England from the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Versailles*.
- SIR GEORGE CORNEWALL LEWIS.—(1806-1863)—*The Credibility of Early Roman History; Influence of Authority on Opinion*.
- CHARLES MERIVALE.—(1808-1893)—sometime Dean of Ely—*History of the Romans under the Empire; The Fall of the Roman Republic*, etc.
- JOHN HILL BURTON.—(1809-1881)—Historiographer Royal for Scotland—*Life of Hume; History of Scotland*.
- WILLIAM FORBES SKENE.—(1809-1892)—Historiographer Royal for Scotland—*The Four Ancient Books of Wales; Celtic Scotland*.
- HENRY ALFORD.—(1810-1871)—London—Dean of Canterbury—edition of the Greek Testament; *Sermons and Poems*.
- NORMAN MACLEOD.—(1812-1872)—minister of Barony Church, Glasgow—eloquent preacher and popular writer.
- JOHN FORSTER.—(1812-1876)—Newcastle—*Life of Goldsmith; Life of Charles Dickens*.
- ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY.—(1815-1881)—Alderley—Dean of Westminster—*Commentary on Corinthians; Life of Dr. Arnold; Memorials of Canterbury*.
- SIR THOMAS ERSKINE MAY (afterwards Baron Farnborough).—(1815-1886)—sometime Clerk of the House of Commons—*Treatise on the Laws, Privileges, Proceedings, and Usages of Parliament; Constitutional History of England, 1760-1860; Democracy in Europe*, etc.
- CHARLES JOHN VAUGHAN.—(1816-1897)—Dean of Llandaff—*Sermons and lectures on several books of the New Testament*.
- SIR WILLIAM STIRLING-MAXWELL.—(1818-1878)—*Annals of Spanish Artists; Cloister-Life of Charles V.; Life of Velasquez*.
- SIR WILLIAM HOWARD RUSSELL.—(1821-1906)—Dublin—Special Correspondent of *The Times*—*Letters on the Crimean War; Diary in India*.

### THEOLOGIAN AND SCHOLARS.

EDWARD BOUVERIE PUSEY (1800-1882) was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He was appointed, in 1828, Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, and he held the post until his death. He wrote several theological works; but he is best remembered as a leader, with Newman and Keble, of the Tractarian party in the Church of England. He contributed to *Tracts for*

*the Times* papers on Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. But when Newman went over to Rome, Pusey exerted all his moral influence to prevent others following, and in the main he was successful.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN (1801-1890) was educated at a private school, and at Trinity College, Oxford. He was ordained in 1824, and four years later accepted the living of St. Mary's. If Keble began the Tractarian movement, at least Newman started the *Tracts for the Times*, and indeed himself wrote several of the most important. He wrote the famous *Tract* 90 (1841), which was the beginning of the end. He preached the well-remembered sermon on "The Development in Christian Doctrine" on February 2, 1843, and shortly after resigned the vicarage of St. Mary's. He entered the Roman Catholic Church in the autumn of 1845. He wrote poems, notably *The Dream of Gerontius*, and several books on religious subjects. He also printed his eloquent sermons; but it is as the author of the *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, a history of his religious opinions, that he takes his place in letters. This religious autobiography, the outcome of a controversy with Charles Kingsley, is a great book, and whatever the creed of the reader, compels admiration for its polished irony and exquisite style.

JOHN FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE (1805-1872), the associate of Kingsley in founding the Working-Men's College, was the author of *Theological Essays*, *The Religions of the World*, and other works, which made him the recognized chief of the "Broad Church" party in the Church of England.

JAMES MARTINEAU (1805-1900), a Unitarian divine and theologian, produced some most eloquent works, among which may be named *Studies in Christianity* and the *Rationale of Religious Inquiry*. A younger brother of Harriet Martineau.

JOHN WILLIAM COLENSO (1814-1883) was a master at Harrow and a tutor at Cambridge before he became rector of Fornsett St. Mary, in Norfolk. Subsequently

he was appointed the first Bishop of Natal. In 1862 he began the publication of his famous criticism on *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua*, which was condemned in both Houses of Convocation, and this was the beginning of a controversy which lasted for many years. It was to him that Disraeli referred in a famous speech when he spoke of "prelates who appear to have commenced their theological studies after they have grasped the crosier." He published his sermons and several volumes of religious works.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- JULIUS CHARLES HARE.—(1795–1855)—Archdeacon of Lewes—a leader of the Broad Church party—sermons on *Victory of Faith* and *Mission of the Comforter*; *Life of John Sterling*; *Niebuhr's History of Rome* (trans.).
- WILLIAM MURE.—(1799–1860)—*Critical Account of the Language and Literature of Ancient Greece*, etc.
- JOHN KITTO.—(1804–1854)—Plymouth—*Pictorial Bible*; *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*; *Daily Bible Illustrations*.
- ROBERT SMITH CANDLISH.—(1806–1873)—Scottish Free Churchman and theologian—*Lectures on Genesis*; *Scripture Characters*; *The Atonement*; *Reason and Revelation*, etc.
- RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH.—(1807–1886)—Archbishop of Dublin—*Justin Martyr*, and other poems; *Notes on the Parables*; *Notes on the Miracles*; *Synonyms of the New Testament*; *Study of Words*; *English Past and Present*.
- WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.—(1809–1898)—Liverpool—four times Prime Minister of Great Britain—*The State in its Relation with the Church*; *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*; *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age*.
- SIR HENRY CRESWICKE RAWLINSON.—(1810–1895)—Chadlington, Oxfordshire—decipherer of Assyrian inscriptions—*Outline of the History of Assyria*.
- JOHN WILLIAM DONALDSON.—(1811–1861)—*The Theatre of the Greeks*; *The New Cratylus*, etc.

#### SCIENTIFIC WRITERS.

HUGH MILLER (1802–1856) was no less remarkable as a master of picturesque English prose than as a practical geologist. After such education as his native town of Cromarty could give, he went to work as a stonemason in the quarries. There his hammer became an instrument of magic, breaking the young workman's way into a subterranean Wonderland. A volume of *Poems* (1829), and some letters on the herring fishery,

opened his brilliant literary career. After fifteen years spent with hammer and chisel—the highest flight of his art being the cutting of epitaphs on tombstones—he became, after his marriage, accountant in a Cromarty bank. In this position about six years were spent, during which his chief literary performance was *Scenes and Legends in the North of Scotland, or the Traditional History of Cromarty*. His zeal on behalf of the Non-Intrusion principle, then agitating the Church of Scotland, led him to write two powerful pamphlets, which attracted so much notice that he was selected, in 1840, to edit *The Witness*. This station he filled until the day of his death. Amid the unceasing toils and distractions of journalism he continued to cultivate his darling study. *The Old Red Sandstone* (1841), *First Impressions of England and its People* (1847), *Footprints of the Creator* (1850), an autobiography entitled *My Schools and Schoolmasters* (1854), and *The Testimony of the Rocks* (1857), a work which he had just completed when madness compelled him to point the fatal pistol to his heart, mark the unceasing labour through which he held his way from year to year. He shot himself on December 24, 1856. *The Cruise of the Betsey*, a geological voyage to the Hebrides, and *The Sketch-book of Popular Geology*, edited by his widow, have appeared since his death. The varied splendour of his style and the grasp of his mental faculties are displayed in his grand Mosaic vision of Creation, woven of such coloured shadows as may have rolled in a gorgeous panorama before the eye of the prophet, sitting upon a hilltop in the lonely Midian desert.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- SIR RICHARD OWEN.—(1804–1892)—Lancaster—a distinguished surgeon and zoologist—*History of British Fossil Mammals and Birds; British Fossil Reptiles*.
- JAMES FREDERICK FERRIER.—(1808–1864)—Professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews—*Institutes of Metaphysics*; edition of Wilson's works.



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SAMUEL LAING.—(1812-1897)—*A Modern Zoroastrian ; Antiquity of Man ; Human Origin ; Modern Science and Modern Thought.*

HENRY LONGUEVILLE MANSEL.—(1820-1871)—Dean of St. Paul's—*Limits of Religious Thought ;* one of the editors of Sir William Hamilton's Lectures ; *Philosophy of the Conditioned.*

The *Dissertations*, written for *The Encyclopædia Britannica* from time to time during the last hundred years, trace the progress of Physical and Mental Science with remarkable clearness and effect. DUGALD STEWART and Sir JAMES MACKINTOSH took up Moral Philosophy ; Archbishop WHATELY dealt with the History of Christianity ; while Mathematics and Physics have been treated successively by JOHN PLAYFAIR (1748-1819), Sir JOHN LESLIE (1766-1832), and JAMES DAVID FORBES (1809-1868), for nine years Principal of the United College, St. Andrews. Forbes is well known for his books upon the *Phænomena of Glaciers*.

Valuable contributions to the literature of Mental and Moral Science have been made by Dr. J. D. MORELL, author of *A Historical and Critical View of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century* ; JAMES M'COSH, President of Princeton College, author of the *Method of the Divine Government* ; ALEXANDER BAIN of Aberdeen, author of *The Senses and the Intellect ; The Emotions and the Will* ; and ALEXANDER CAMPBELL FRASER, the editor of *Bishop Berkeley's Works*.

Physical Science has advanced with rapid strides during recent years, and has been prosecuted by men who, like Brewster and Hugh Miller, were possessed of rare literary power. Dr. WILLIAM B. CARPENTER (1813-1885) published important works on animal and vegetable physiology, and on oceanic circulation. Dr. ALLEN THOMSON of Glasgow (1809-1884) was also a distinguished physiologist. Sir JOSEPH DALTON HOOKER (born 1817) has written on the flora of the British Islands and of British India.

### TRAVELLERS AND GEOGRAPHERS.

ALEXANDER WILLIAM KINGLAKE (1809-1891), having passed through Trinity College, Cambridge, studied law at Lincoln's Inn. His book, *Eothen* (1844), descriptive of his travels in the East, is remarkable for its wit and eloquence. Kinglake also wrote a *History of the Crimean War*, courageous and brilliant, but in the later volumes too minute in detail.

DAVID LIVINGSTONE (1813-1873) was born at Blantyre, in Lanarkshire, and travelled much in Africa as a missionary. His *Missionary Travels in South Africa*, a valuable repertory of facts concerning that region, was published in 1857. The basin of the Zambesi was the chief scene of his explorings, and his chief discoveries were the Victoria Falls and Lake

Nyassa. In 1865 he published an account of his second expedition. He returned to Africa in 1866, and died there in 1873. His *Last Journals* were published after his death.

SIR AUSTEN HENRY LAYARD (1817-1894) was distinguished as the author of two works—*Nineveh and its Remains* (1848), and *The Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon* (1853), describing his successful excavations, especially at the former place. Sculptured bulls and lions, with wings and human heads, stand, amid many other similar works of ancient art, in the hall of the British Museum, as trophies of Layard's toil. For a time he took a prominent part in politics as member for Aylesbury, and Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

Sir JOHN BOWRING (1792-1872), otherwise famous as a translator, wrote an account of Siam. ELIOT Warburton (1810-1852), an English barrister, who was burned in the *Amazon*, has left, besides some novels and memoirs, an eloquent book of Eastern travel, *The Crescent and the Cross* (1844). China has been described by JOHN FRANCIS DAVIS, Chief Superintendent there, and WINGROVE COOKE, Special Correspondent of *The Times*; and Japan by LAURENCE OLIPHANT, Secretary to Lord Elgin. The Rev. JOSIAS LESLIE PORTER, President of Queen's College, Belfast, was the author of *Five Years in Damascus*, and Murray's *Handbook for Palestine and Syria*. Captain SHERARD OSBORN (1822-1875), author of *Stray Leaves from an Arctic Journal*, also wrote *A Cruise in Japanese Waters*.

Arctic travel and discovery during this period of English literature are represented by many eminent names, among which those of Dr. JOHN RAE, Sir ROBERT JOHN LE MESURIER M'CLURE, discoverer of the North-West Passage, and Sir LEOPOLD M'CLINTOCK, commander of the *Fox*, are prominent. Sir FRANCIS BOND HEAD (1793-1875), for some time Governor of Upper Canada, wrote a popular work upon *The Pampas and the Andes* (1827); and a Yorkshire squire, CHARLES WATERTON (1782-1865), depicted his wonderful adventures and toils in *Wanderings in South America, the North-West of the United States, and the Antilles*.

# TENTH ERA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

THE PRESENT TIME.

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## CHAPTER I.

### SOME TENDENCIES IN MODERN FICTION.

As the genius of the Elizabethans expressed itself most spontaneously and most eloquently by the drama, as later revivals of national enthusiasm inspired new schools of poetry, so the novels of to-day are the mirror of our social and intellectual life, and the expression of our national characteristics. The history of literature at the beginning of the twentieth century is largely a history of fiction.

The reason for this is not far to seek. Fiction is the most recently discovered of the cardinal literary forms, and has not yet shed the glamour of novelty. Moreover, it has certain specific merits which commend it to our generation.

The drama has lost the literary character which fitted it to be an adequate expression of an age's thought. For the moment also we have ceased to be a poetical race; commerce, practical science, and luxury have, temporarily, banished imagination. Since no age can live without expression, we have been compelled to find a new medium, and the novel is obviously the medium most suited for a complex and critical civilization. Fiction is the most flexible of all forms, and can be adapted easily and naturally

to every point of view. While poetry remains almost of necessity prophetic and demands the inspiration of a strong faith, the novel, even when sincere and earnest in purpose, may also picture the questioner and adapt itself to the changing phases of thought. Great poetry requires a simplification and unification of life which is impossible for an age not yet sure of itself, and bewildered by the multiplicity of detail. The drama, too, by its artistic limitations, demands a similar simplification. The novel alone, while demanding for success a single dominant idea, admits of the picturesque reproduction of the changing phases and conditions of daily life.

Fiction, indeed, would seem to have spontaneously extended her boundaries in response to our need for a growing and unfettered medium of expression. The novel has changed since the days of Richardson, when the hero was, as a matter of course, a good-looking young man seeking adventures, sowing his wild oats, and attracting all women while loving one. The heroine existed only to tempt the villain and reward the hero; the minor characters, comic or tragic, belonged to fixed and recognized types. These novels had the cardinal excellences of fiction; they represented life, and represented it in its dramatic moments. But the area within which character was observed was narrow, and the drama was apt to take the form of a certain number of stereotyped situations.

Gradually to this simple conception of heroic adventure succeeded artistic self-consciousness, and the evolution of a theory of story-telling. The novelist began to talk about *his art*, to ask himself what was its ultimate purpose, what were its limits, and what its relations to other literary forms. The profession split itself into schools, and a protracted controversy began between the apostles of so-called romance and the worshippers of so-called realism. On this controversy Robert Louis Stevenson has said the last word:—

"The Observer (poor soul, with his documents!) is all abroad. For to look at a man is but to court deception. We shall see the trunk from which he draws his nourishment; but he himself is above and abroad in the green dome of foliage, hummed through by wind and rested in by nightingales. And the true realism is that of the poets, to climb up after him like a squirrel, and catch some glimpse of the heaven for which he lives. And the true realism, always and everywhere, is that of the poets; to find out where joy resides; and give it a voice far beyond singing."

To-day it is a truism that the schools of romance and realism are inseparably connected. We find romancers adopting methods of realistic detail, much as theologians have mastered scientific methods. The truth is that every true picture of life must be a romance, for the primary aim of a novel is to delight the reader. This delight must come from a recognizable picture of life. There must be the observation and the close study of the realist at the back of it all. The realists have taught us many lessons in craftsmanship which increase the scope and truth of the novelist's art. Their error consisted in mistaking the means for the end; in imagining that a chronicle of fact, as fact, fell within the definition of art. Romance without realism is barren, and realism without romance is blind.

The development of the novel from Scott to Hugo is a good instance of what we mean. Scott had all the essentials of the great romancer. He knew and loved human nature in its infinite variety; moreover, he saw clearly that the aim of fiction was the attainment of the dramatic moment, and in every great novel he achieves this pregnant drama. But some of the old conventions of fiction still clung to him. His heroes and heroines were apt to be those of the older novelists, and his detail was as often as not modelled on conventional lines. Hugo, seeking the same dramatic effect—seeking, that is to say, human character through action—was more first-hand in his observation, more conscientious in his psychology. Scott and Hugo stand in the front rank of the world's novelists. They are both the greatest of romancers;

but while the former may be now and then criticized justifiably from the realist's point of view, the latter takes the best of realism, and makes it subserve the interests of romance.

The danger, of course, in this development is that the simplicity of the romance proper may be lost, and that in discarding the trappings of the heroic age the dramatic may slip out of the story. The minute observation of certain French realists, set down in the manner of a Blue Book, is not fiction itself, but the material for fiction. The novel is a form of art, and unless the novelist can master his detail and make it subserve an artistic—in this sense a dramatic—purpose, his work has no claim to be considered literature in the higher sense. Just because fiction is the characteristic mode of expression of our age, the novelist is apt to be perplexed in his aims and uncertain as to his ideas. He is more ambitious, more complex, less single-hearted than his robust predecessors. He desires to paint humanity and the circumstances which he sees around him with accurate form and colour, sparing us no detail, however sordid. He may desire to preach a new gospel in morals, religion, or politics; to expound a new theory of society; or to work some practical reform. We have the religious novel, the political novel, the novel which would forecast the future. The second-rate author may well forget in such confusion the primary business of his art, which is to give us significant drama—action representative of character. It is only the great masters—the Balzacs, the Tourgenieffs, and the Merediths—who can grapple with the complex details of modern life, and yet keep the ultimate purpose of art clearly before their eyes. The minor author who attempts the same task would be apt to give us a mere palimpsest of impressions, a dry chronicle of detail, as in the case of some distinguished French realists. In self-defence, therefore, we find many writers whose genius is not adequate to



fiction in the greatest sense, who deliberately specialize and limit themselves to what is either a slightly artificial form or a chronicle of secondary emotions and trivial incidents. We find romances of the "cloak and sword" school, admirably fashioned, but wholly artificial in their design. The idyll, too, has grown in favour, and every locality has a chronicle of its own small beer. The tendency is, on the whole, a good one, for these minor forms are, in their limited way, very perfect, and it is better to succeed in painting a miniature than to fail in attempting a great canvas.

The chief characteristic of the modern novel, then, is an enlargement of its area. No type of life is excluded from its survey. Every quarter of the world, every rank of society, every profession, has been exploited by the novelist with a conscientiousness and honesty which are wholly admirable. Even the old historical romance has taken on a new colour. Instead of the sequence of trivial adventures, which at one time did duty for the historical novel, we have now many elaborate and subtle studies of past epochs, written by men who have read and thought themselves back into the modes of an earlier age. Fiction, by holding nothing human alien from its interests, has made for itself the free conditions in which alone art can flourish in the hands of the greatest masters. The novel has made itself adequate to the needs of the age. It has gained much in vitality, variety, and depth. It is richer in colouring, more subtle in observation, more artistic in form. Even in the popular type the standard of merit is maintained at a high level. Just as in the days of the Greek rhapsodists and of our own balladists there was a vast quantity of good work produced by men who were not pre-eminently distinguished above their fellows, so we see every day novelists who, if not great, are adequate to the needs of the age, and reach a reasonable point of artistic accomplishment.

The great peaks of fiction of our day rise not from the valleys, but from a table-land.

There are many dangers in the way. Genius is always sufficient to herself, and can master for her own advancement that which leads plain men astray, but those short of the greatest have pitfalls in their path. The habit of specialization may lead to an observation confined to one aspect of life, which is very different from the catholicity of the great masters. Such specialization is well enough in its way, but it is wrong to claim for a chronicle of village gossip the same artistic quality as we find in Tolstoi or Meredith. Again, those who do not specialize but manfully confront the widened area of fiction, may tend to confine themselves to a meticulous accuracy of observation, and to forget the need for the shaping spirit of art. Of the two dangers the first is the less serious, for the first results in an artistic product of a kind, while the second ends in the production of mere raw material. On the other hand, let it be added that a great writer will be apt to fall into the second rather than the first, since his ambition drives him to attempt that to which his art is not adequate.

In modern fiction one name stands out before all others. George Meredith was the subtlest observer of our day, the most catholic and balanced critic, the most richly endowed with the creative spirit of imagination. He gives us life in its profoundest reality, for his eyes pierce beyond the commonplace to the eternal truths of art and human nature. In the gallery of his novels all types of character are represented, and all are drawn with equal sympathy and insight. Nor does he forget that the chief aim of fiction is the attainment of the dramatic moment, and in all his greater novels the reader is thrilled by a drama which is none the less real because it is so profoundly significant. He may well stand with Scott, Hugo, Balzac, and Tourgenieff as among the greatest masters of the art of fiction. Following him

at a short distance comes Mr. Thomas Hardy, who, with a more restricted area of vision, shows the same great qualities of insight and dramatic power. These two names stand by themselves, but on the lower slopes we have a host of capable practitioners in every department of the novel. We have admirable romancers, idyllists, makers of short stories, scientific fairy-tale writers, students of the comedy of manners, impressionists both in tragedy and farce. Whatever its faults, the English novel of to-day is a living, vital form of art, for it proceeds from a popular impulse, and it is directed to satisfy a popular need. It is the ballad of our day; and, as in the ballad, while much is temporary and transient, the best work will remain as the authoritative interpretation of modern needs and ideals.

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## CHAPTER II.

JOHN RUSKIN.

Born 1819 A.D. . . . . Died 1900 A.D.

OF Ruskin it has been well written: "He was like the living conscience of the modern world, and felt acutely the wrongs and wrong-doings of others. . . . In an earlier age he might have become a saint. In his own age he spent himself, his time, and his wealth in trying to illuminate and ennoble the lives of others. . . . 'It is not my work that drives me mad,' he once said, 'but the sense that nothing comes of it.'"

It is perhaps not yet possible to determine with finality how much has "come of it;" but no student of the great forces at work in the nineteenth century or of the inner meanings revealed by its progress could venture to neglect John Ruskin. The gospels—in art or in economics—to the expression of which his life was devoted, have been somewhat discredited

of recent years: he is admittedly a dangerous guide on many topics. But he lives, and will live, a master of vigorous, transparent English, and a personality of undisputed pre-eminence among the giants of his age.

The circumstances of Ruskin's life were in many respects peculiarly favourable to the untrammelled exercise of literary talent, though, on the other hand, the careful idolatry of his parents must have narrowed his outlook and strengthened his prejudices. He lived continuously with his father and mother "until their deaths, at the ages respectively of seventy-nine and ninety." Both the old people had great powers and strong wills; they practically "nursed him till long past middle age." Their lives were entirely given up to the development of one whom they not unnaturally regarded as "an infant Samuel."

John Ruskin was born at 54 Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, on February 8, 1819, but in his fifth year the family moved to Herne Hill, then a "rustic eminence" a few miles out of the city, and he acquired from the very first a passionate love for landscapes, from which all his artistic enthusiasms really originated, and to which he remained faithful till death.

At the age of four he requested the artist engaged by the proud parents upon his portrait to give him a background of "blue hills;" and the record has been preserved of a "sermon" by him, delivered even before that age: "People, be good. If you are good, God will love you; if you are not good, God will not love you. People, be good." He practised original composition, in prose and verse, before he was seven; and, in his own words, led "a very small, perky, contented, conceited Cock-Robinson-Crusoe sort of life, in the central point which it appeared to me that I occupied in the universe."

Such injudicious isolation, however, was partially counteracted by the driving tours, on which his father collected orders for sherry, over many of the most beautiful parts of England and Scotland. The

elder Ruskin would take his boy to every castle, cathedral, or picture gallery within reasonable distance, and so stimulated a natural inherited love of beauty. Throughout life the family travelled constantly—a trip abroad their one infallible cure for illness or melancholy.

In 1836, having already written much poetry only published many years later, and a few articles printed and praised at the time, the self-centred young man fell seriously in love with a "Paris-bred" Spanish beauty of fifteen, who "reduced him to a heap of white ashes in four days." But the fair Adèle laughed at his heroics, and he went to bury himself in the study of geometry and Thucydides at Christ Church, Oxford; his mother coming to lodge in the town, and having him to tea with her every evening in order to watch over his health. This precaution, however open to ridicule, was not apparently unwarranted, for, on hearing the news of Adèle's marriage in 1840, he was suddenly attacked with hemorrhage of the lungs, and Mrs. Ruskin's promptitude in taking him on to the Continent for rest and change no doubt saved his life.

He returned to Oxford in due course, and took the B.A. with credit during May 1842. Ruskin the elder had unwisely made him a gentleman-commoner, and his university career does not mark any very obvious progress in his development, though it seems to have finally fixed his determination, always deeply regretted by his parents, against becoming a bishop; and he now also "flatly declined to enter the sherry trade."

In fact the mission of his long and active career was already stirring beneath the surface, and destined to bear early fruit. The apostle of nature and art entered the lists of authorship with a spirited and eloquent justification of *Turner as the chief interpreter of the new nature worship*. In his seventeenth year he had "been raised to the height of black anger" by *Blackwood's* attack on that artist as "out of

nature." His first serious work was projected as *Turner and the Ancients*, finally carrying the "eminently veracious and characteristic title"—*Modern Painters: their Superiority in the Art of Landscape Painting to all the Ancient Masters proved by Examples of the True, the Beautiful, and the Intellectual from the Works of Modern Artists, especially from those of J. M. W. Turner, Esq., R.A.* The elder Ruskin had been soon converted, and gave his son some fine originals by their favourite artist. The family mansion at Denmark Hill, occupied till Mrs. Ruskin's death in 1871, contained "no less than thirty Turners, the collection of minerals; apples, peaches—pigs especially, highly educated, who spoke excellent Irish." Six years after Turner's death in 1851, Ruskin arranged, selected, and catalogued the 20,000 drawings and studies which the master had bequeathed to the nation.

The first volume of *Modern Painters* appeared anonymously in 1843; but the secret was very soon divulged, and the critic of twenty-four found himself a figure in the world of culture. His 1843 heresies scandalized the conventional in art, in A.D. literature, and in theology; but men of insight welcomed the reformer and recognized his new ideas. A trip through Switzerland and the Italian Lakes, ending at the Louvre in Paris, opened his eyes "all at once" to the greatness of Titian, of Veronese, Bellini, and Perugino. The man whom we now associate more intimately than any other with the artistic and architectural treasures of Italy only awoke to the importance of history in art—and, incidentally, of the history of man—after the formal and dogmatic announcement of his first gospel. The second volume of *Modern Painters* (1846) is mainly concerned with "the quality of beauty in all happy conditions of living organism," and with the works of Angelico and Tintoretto.

His two next books—*The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), and *The Stones of Venice* (1851 and 1853)—carried the new application of morality to art a



step further, containing in fact the keynote of his philosophy and of his ultimate social gospel—"the dependence of all human work or edifice for its beauty on the happy life of the workman." Like *Modern Painters*, these wonderful volumes struck at the roots of conventionality, and bristled with new ideas. They were equally fearless, equally dogmatic, even more eloquent.

They were followed by some years of very varied activity as writer and lecturer on many subjects, until, in 1860, the exact middle year of his life, Ruskin stepped formally into his career as a social reformer by the publication of four essays in *The Cornhill Magazine*, afterwards issued in book form with the title *Unto This Last*. We have not the space here to go into all his teaching on this matter. He was a pioneer of many reforms now earnestly desired by all good men and true, of some that have been already accomplished. His practical experiments, if foredoomed to failure in detail, were instinct with generous enthusiasm, and have borne noble fruit against social oppression in unexpected quarters. His economics were mediæval and sentimental; but many of his ideas have become truisms. His work as Slade Professor at Oxford, summarily resigned in anticipation of vivisection, inspired a group of ardent reformers towards the practice and promulgation of his socialistic ideals; and all the publications of his later life were directed to the same end.

In 1875 he had written: "What am I, to claim leadership, infirm and old? . . . Such as I am, to my own amazement, I stand—so far as I can discern—alone in conviction, in hope, and in resolution, in the wilderness of this modern world." Always morbidly sensitive and "furiously seeking peace through indefatigable work," he never recognized the actual advance which he had done so much to promote; and, broken down at last by the mental strain of unrealized ideals, he spent the last ten years,

not unhappily, in complete rest and retirement. He died a victim to influenza on January 20, 1900, within two weeks of his eighty-first birthday.

#### FROM "SESAME AND LILIES."

Did you notice that I missed two lines when I read you that first stanza; and think that I had forgotten them? Hear them now:—

"Come into the garden, Maud,  
For the black bat, night, has flown.  
Come into the garden, Maud,  
I am here at the gate, alone."

Who is it, think you, who stands at the gate of this sweeter garden, alone, waiting for you? Did you ever hear, not of a Maud, but a Madeleine, who went down to her garden in the dawn, and found One waiting at the gate, whom she supposed to be the gardener? Have you not sought Him often; sought Him in vain, all through the night; sought Him in vain at the gate of that old garden where the fiery sword is set? He is never there; but at the gate of *this* garden He is waiting always—waiting to take your hand—ready to go down to see the fruits of the valley, to see whether the vine has flourished, and the pomegranate budded. There you shall see with Him the little tendrils of the vines that His hand is guiding—there you shall see the pomegranate springing where His hand cast the sanguine seed;—more: you shall see the troops of the angel keepers that, with their wings, wave away the hungry birds from the pathsides where He has sown, and call to each other between the vineyard rows, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes." Oh—you queens—you queens; among the hills and happy greenwood of this land of yours, shall the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; and in your cities shall the stones cry out against you, that they are the only pillows where the Son of Man can lay His head?

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#### FROM "THE STONES OF VENICE."

One more circumstance remains to be noted respecting the Venetian government: the singular unity of the families composing it—unity far from sincere or perfect, but still admirable when contrasted with the fiery feuds, the almost daily revolutions, the restless successions of families and parties in power, which fill the annals of the other states of Italy. That rivalry should sometimes be ended by the dagger, or enmity conducted to its ends under the mask of law, could not but be anticipated where the fierce Italian spirit was subjected to so severe a restraint: it is much that jealousy appears usually unmingled with illegitimate ambition, and that, for every instance in which private passion sought its gratification through public danger, there are a thousand in which it was sacrificed to the public advantage. Venice may well call upon us to note with reverence, that of all the towers which are still seen rising like a branchless forest from her islands, there is but one whose office was other than that of summoning to prayer,

and that one was a watch tower only: from first to last, while the palaces of the other cities of Italy were lifted into sullen fortitudes of rampart, and fringed with forked battlements for the javelin and the bow, the sands of Venice never sank under the weight of a war-tower, and her roof terraces were wreathed with Arabian imagery of golden globes suspended on the leaves of lilies.

These, then, appear to me to be the points of chief general interest in the character and fate of the Venetian people. I would next endeavour to give the reader some idea of the manner in which the testimony of Art bears upon these questions, and of the aspect which the arts themselves assume when they are regarded in their true connection with the history of the State:

First, receive the witness of painting.

It will be remembered that I put the commencement of the Fall of Venice as far back as 1418.

Now, John Bellini was born in 1423, and Titian in 1480. John Bellini, and his brother Gentile, two years older than he, close the line of the sacred painters of Venice. But the most solemn spirit of religious faith animates their works to the last. There is no religion in any work of Titian's: there is not even the smallest evidence of religious temper or sympathies either in himself, or in those for whom he painted. His larger sacred subjects are merely themes for the exhibition of pictorial rhetoric—composition and colour. His minor works are generally made subordinate to purposes of portraiture. The Madonna in the church of the Frari is a mere lay figure, introduced to form a link of connection between the portraits of various members of the Pesaro family who surround her.

Now this is not merely because John Bellini was a religious man and Titian was not. Titian and Bellini are each true representatives of the school of painters contemporary with them; and the difference in their artistic feeling is a consequence not so much of difference in their own natural characters as in their early education: Bellini was brought up in faith, Titian in formalism. Between the years of their births the vital religion of Venice had expired.

The *vital* religion, observe; not the formal. Outward observance was as strict as ever; and Doge and senator still were painted, in almost every important instance, kneeling before the Madonna or St. Mark; a confession of faith made universal by the pure gold of the Venetian sequin. But observe the great picture of Titian's, in the ducal palace, of the Doge Antonio Grimani kneeling before Faith: there is a curious lesson in it. The figure of Faith is a coarse portrait of one of Titian's least graceful female models: Faith had become carnal. The eye is first caught by the flash of the Doge's armour: the heart of Venice was in her wars, not in her worship.

The mind of Tintoret, incomparably more deep and serious than that of Titian, casts the solemnity of its own tone over the sacred subjects which it approaches, and sometimes forgets itself into devotion; but the principle of treatment is altogether the same as Titian's: absolute subordination of the religious subject to purposes of decoration or portraiture.

The evidence might be accumulated a thousandfold from the works of Veronese, and of every succeeding painter—that the fifteenth century had taken away the religious heart of Venice.





JOHN RUSKIN.

*(Photo by Elliott and Fry.)*

## CHAPTER III.

GEORGE ELIOT.

Born 1819 A.D. . . . . Died 1880 A.D.

FOR many years George Eliot influenced thought and culture among the middle classes more widely, and perhaps more profoundly, than any other writer. The moral problems involved in the relations between Dorothea and Will Ladislaw were a favourite topic for tea-table conversation in serious families; and when the novelist herself married again, it seemed to many that an ideal had been desecrated. Her intensity of religious feeling, combined with independence towards theological authority, expressed with truly artistic effect the whole temperament of a generation whose spiritual cravings were almost exclusively ethical. To-day the reaction towards a very general neglect of her work is quite unjust. We forget that though we may, indeed, have outlived her mental standpoint, and though we condemn the novel with a purpose, she was before all things a great artist in fiction.

Though the authorship of the novels was not disclosed immediately on publication, it was soon known in literary circles, and never zealously guarded from the world. Every one has long been aware that George Eliot was the *nom-de-plume* of Mary Ann Evans, daughter of an estate agent, who was born on November 22, 1819, at Arbury Farm, near Nuneaton, and brought up in a somewhat narrow Evangelical circle.

Early influences, however, considerably modified the traditions of the Arbury Farm household; and when she moved to London as sub-editor of the Radical quarterly, *The Westminster Review*, Miss Evans was already in tune with the serious agnosticism destined to colour her life and work, under the stimulating



companionship of George Henry Lewes, brilliant *litterateur*, critic, and philosopher.

The friendship, originating in literary co-operation, led to a life-long union, and the biographers of George Eliot have devoted much, not very profitable, study to an examination of his share in the work by which she ultimately became famous. No doubt he took the deepest and most sympathetic interest in all her books; their ethics and their philosophy reflect only too faithfully what we know of his individual theories on men and life; but the more robust and more permanent qualities of her genius were no less certainly original and independent. For George Eliot will live, not by her somewhat ponderous sermonizings, but by the characters she created, by her elaborately truthful pictures of English middle-class life, and by the concentration of tragic emotion, which is always unmistakably her central aim.

Her earliest work of fiction, the *Scenes of Clerical Life*, appeared in 1858 (being in part a reprint from *Blackwood's Magazine*), and riveted public 1858 attention. Though limited in plot or incident, A.D. and not containing any of those consciously humorous sketches of the commonplace on which some critics lay much stress, they give abundant evidence of her highest powers. *Adam Bede* followed in 1859, and here, though the incidents and characters belong to the same limited sphere, the dramatic effect is more intense, the canvas is larger, the artist's hand works with greater boldness. *Silas Marner* (1861) is scarcely longer or more complex than one of the *Scenes*; but the certainty of touch has matured, and many readers are disposed to judge it her greatest work.

A line, which is not altogether imaginary, has been drawn by critics of style between these three volumes and their author's later work. It has been said that in them, at least, every detail of literary craftsmanship is concentrated on "one special aim—that of increasing the intensity of the tragic chord that is to

be struck." Everything is self-conscious and deliberate, almost painfully careful. The turn of each sentence, the choice of each word, is designed to heighten the effect. The picture is elaborately truthful. But in these earlier books, and always at inspired moments, "the ground is so familiar to the author, she works in it with such ease, she achieves her effect with such certainty, that this elaboration of style seems fitting and suitable, and is so entirely consistent with the intense emotion of the story as to have a comparatively slight appearance of artificiality or strain."

Unfortunately, George Eliot afterwards extended her range of thought and subject, and "in so doing lost her nicety of touch." The elaboration and the mannerisms increased with practice. The trick of expressing humour in a pedantic phrase and applying classical idioms to the commonplace becomes wearisome with repetition, and her fondness for aphorisms degenerated into a mere device for cloaking truisms.

Unquestionably the artistic faults above enumerated have diminished George Eliot's reputation; but they should not tempt us to deny the undoubted genius of all her work, including the later and more ambitious novels.

*The Mill on the Floss*, for example (actually published in 1860, before *Silas Marner*), betrays the decadence in style, but contains some of the finest passages she ever wrote. The childhood of Maggie Tulliver, generally supposed to be partially autobiographical, has seldom, if ever, been matched for pathos and sympathy; and the whole picture of family life stands pre-eminent alike by its humorous and its tragic effects.

The historic passages in *Romola* (1863), and its subtle analysis of character, will always attract serious readers; and though *Felix Holt* (1866) is artificially constructed and marred by much preaching, its keen sympathy with aspiring radicalism reflects the age.

The verdict of an uncritical public would, probably, accept *Middlemarch*, which appeared in 1872, as its author's masterpiece. It certainly exhibits, with remarkable fullness, the special qualities which endear her to the general public. The human interest is deep and varied, the characters are vivid and original, the development of events is dramatic; and if the interweaving of three plots be an artistic blunder, destroying all sense of proportion, it yet serves to command our closest attention throughout.

In *Daniel Deronda* (1876) George Eliot attempted, with but partial success, to illustrate certain characteristics of the Jewish race. The story has considerable power, but, for all its sympathetic eloquence, just fails to convey the true fascination, the eternal mystery of the Chosen People.

This was her last novel. Two years later, after a fruitful quarter of a century spent in the closest intellectual and emotional comradeship, she 1878 lost her partner; and it appears that the A.D. death of Lewes finally silenced her pen.

Typically feminine in her emotions, despite the apparent virility of her intellect, George Eliot could not long bear up against solitude; and, in 1880, she married Mr. J. W. Cross, an action provoking much foolish and impertinent comment. Only seven months later she joined

"The choir invisible,  
Whose music is the gladness of the world."

George Eliot, like many another cultured novelist, wrote some worthy poems, of which *The Spanish Gipsy* (1868) is the most ambitious. Her gift of music was scarcely on the same level as her other talents.

Her contribution to literature, placing her in the highest rank, was the creation of many characters, instinct with humanity, struggling with fine moral earnestness towards the attainment of an ideal, halting long and stumbling often by the way. Their

appeal to readers of each succeeding generation is irresistible ; while the crowded backgrounds, so truthfully and dramatically portrayed, of a generation when the English middle classes were ever eager in extending their moral and mental horizon, can never lose their value as an important chapter in social history.

## AN EPILOGUE.

(FROM "SCENES OF CLERICAL LIFE.")

This was Mr. Gilfil's love-story, which lay far back from the time when he sat, worn and gray, by his lonely fireside in Shepperton Vicarage. Rich brown locks, passionate love, and deep early sorrow, strangely different as they seem from the scanty white hairs, the apathetic content, and the unexpected quiescence of old age, are but part of the same life's journey ; as the bright Italian plains, with the sweet *Addio* of their beckoning maidens, are part of the same day's travel that brings us to the other side of the mountain, between the sombre rocky walls and among the guttural voices of the *Vajais*.

To those who were familiar only with the gray-haired vicar, jogging leisurely along on his old chestnut cob, it would perhaps have been hard to believe that he had ever been the Maynard Gilfil, who, with a heart full of passion and tenderness, had urged his black Kitty to her swiftest gallop on the way to Callam, or that the old gentleman of caustic tongue and bucolic tastes and sparing habits had known all the deep secrets of devoted love, had struggled through its days and nights of anguish, and trembled under its unspeakable joys. And indeed the Mr. Gilfil of those late Shepperton days had more of the knots and ruggedness of poor human nature than there lay any clear hint of in the open-eyed loving Maynard. But it is with men as with trees ; if you lop off their finest branches, into which they were pouring their young life-juice, the wounds will be healed over with some rough boss, some odd excrescence ; and what might have been a grand tree expanding into liberal shade is but a whimsical, misshapen trunk. Many an irritating fault, many an unlovely oddity, has come of a hard sorrow, which has crushed and maimed the nature just when it was expanding into plenteous beauty ; and the trivial erring life which we visit with our harsh blame may be but as the unsteady motion of a man whose best limb is withered.

And so the dear old vicar, though he had something of the knotted whimsical character of the poor lopped oak, had yet been sketched out by Nature as a noble tree. The heart of him was sound, the grain was of the finest ; and in the gray-haired man who filled his pocket with sugar-plums for the little children, whose most biting words were directed against the evil doing of the rich man, and who, with all his social pipes and slipshod talk, never sank below the highest level of his parishioners' respect, there was the main trunk of the same brave, faithful, tender nature that had poured out the finest, freshest forces of its life-current in a first and only love—the love of Tina.

## A FARMHOUSE.

(FROM "ADAM BEDE.")

Evidently that gate is never opened : for the long grass and the great hemlocks grow close against it ; and if it were opened, it is so rusty, that the force necessary to turn it on its hinges would be likely to pull down the square stone-built pillars, to the detriment of the two stone lionesses which grin with a carnivorous affability above a coat of arms surmounting each of the pillars. It would be easy enough, by the aid of the nicks in the stone pillars, to climb over the brick wall with its smooth stone coping ; but by putting our eyes close to the rusty bars of the gate, we can see the house well enough, and all but the very corners of the grassy enclosure.

It is a very fine old place, of red brick, softened by a pale powdery lichen, which has dispersed itself with a happy irregularity, so as to bring the red brick into terms of friendly companionship with the limestone ornaments surrounding the three gables, the windows, and the door-place. But the windows are patched with wooden panes, and the door, I think, is like the gate—it is never opened : how it would groan and grate against the stone floor if it were ! For it is a solid, heavy, handsome door, and must once have been in the habit of shutting with a sonorous bang behind a liveried lackey, who had just seen his master and mistress off the grounds in a carriage and pair.

But at present one might fancy the house in the early stage of a chancery suit, and that the fruit from that grand double row of walnut-trees on the right hand of the enclosure would fall and rot among the grass, if it were not that we heard the booming bark of dogs echoing from great buildings at the back. And now the half-weaned calves that have been sheltering themselves in a gorse-built hovel against the left-hand wall, come out and set up a silly answer to that terrible bark, doubtless supposing that it has reference to buckets of milk.

Yes, the house must be inhabited, and we will see by whom ; for imagination is a licensed trespasser ; it has no fear of dogs, but may climb over walls and peep in at windows with impunity. Put your face to one of the glass panes in the right-hand window ; what do you see ? A large open fireplace, with rusty dogs in it, and a bare-boarded floor ; at the far end, fleeces of wool stacked up ; in the middle of the floor, some empty corn-bags. That is the furniture of the dining-room. And what through the left-hand window ? Several clothes-horses, a pillion, a spinning-wheel, and an old box wide open, and stuffed full of coloured rags. At the edge of this box there lies a great wooden doll, which, so far as mutilation is concerned, bears a strong resemblance to the finest Greek sculpture, and especially in the total loss of its nose. Near it there is a little chair, and the butt-end of a boy's leather long-lashed whip.

The history of the house is plain now. It was once the residence of a country squire, whose family, probably dwindling down to mere spinsterhood, got merged in the more territorial name of Donni-thorne. It was once the Hall ; it is now the Hall Farm. Like the life in some coast town that was once a watering-place, and is now a port, where the genteel streets are silent and grass-grown, and the

docks and warehouses busy and resonant, the life at the Hall has changed its focus, and no longer radiates from the parlour, but from the kitchen and the farm-yard.

Plenty of life there! though this is the drowsiest time of the year, just before the hay-harvest; and it is the drowsiest time of the day too, for it is close upon three by the sun, and it is half-past three by Mrs. Poyser's handsome eight-day clock. But there is always a stronger sense of life when the sun is brilliant after rain; and now he is pouring down his beams, and making sparks among the wet straw, and lighting up every patch of vivid green moss on the red tiles of the cow-shed, and turning even the muddy water that is hurrying along the channel to the drain into a mirror for the yellow-billed ducks, who are seizing the opportunity of getting a drink with as much body in it as possible. There is quite a concert of noises: the great bull-dog, chained against the stables, is thrown into furious exasperation by the unwary approach of a cock too near the mouth of his kennel, and sends forth a thundering bark, which is answered by two fox-hounds shut up in the opposite cow-house; the old top-knotted hens, scratching with their chicks among the straw, set up a sympathetic croaking as the discomfited cock joins them; a sow with her brood, all very muddy as to the legs, and curled as to the tail, throws in some deep staccato notes; our friends the calves are bleating from the same home croft; and under all, a fine ear discerns the continuous hum of human voices.

For the great barn-doors are thrown wide open, and men are busy there mending the harness, under the superintendence of Mr. Goby, the "whittaw," otherwise saddler, who entertains them with the latest Treddleston gossip. It is certainly rather an unfortunate day that Alick, the shepherd, has chosen for having the whittaws, since the morning turned out so wet; and Mrs. Poyser had spoken her mind pretty strongly as to the dirt which the extra number of men's shoes brought into the house at dinner-time. Indeed she has not yet recovered her equanimity on the subject, though it is now nearly three hours since dinner, and the house floor is perfectly clean again; as clean as everything else in that wonderful house-place, where the only chance of collecting a few grains of dust would be to climb on the salt-coffer and put your finger on the high mantel-shelf on which the glittering brass candle-sticks are enjoying their summer sinecure; for at this time of year, of course, every one goes to bed while it is yet light, or at least light enough to discern the outline of objects after you have bruised your shins against them. Surely nowhere else could an oak clock-case and an oak table have got such a polish by the hand: genuine "elbow polish," as Mrs. Poyser called it, for she thanked God she never had any of your varnished rubbish in her house. Hetty Sorrel often took the opportunity, when her aunt's back was turned, of looking at the pleasant reflection of herself in those polished surfaces, for the oak table was usually turned up like a screen, and was more for ornament than for use; and she could see herself sometimes in the great round pewter dishes that were ranged on the shelves above the long deal dinner table, or in the hobs of the grate, which always shone like jasper.

Everything was looking at its brightest at this moment, for the sun shone right on the pewter dishes, and from their reflecting surfaces pleasant jets of light were thrown on mellow oak and bright



brass ;—and on a still pleasanter object than these ; for some of the rays fell on Dinah's finely moulded cheek, and lit up her pale red hair to auburn, as she bent over the heavy household linen which she was mending for her aunt. No scene could have been more peaceful ; if Mrs. Poyser, who was ironing a few things that still remained from the Monday's wash, had not been making frequent clinking with her iron, and moving to and fro whenever she wanted it to cool ; carrying the keen glance of her blue-gray eye from the kitchen to the dairy, where Hetty was making up the butter, and from the dairy to the back-kitchen, where Nancy was taking the pies out of the oven. Do not suppose, however, that Mrs. Poyser was elderly or shrewish in her appearance ; she was a good-looking woman, not more than eight-and-thirty, of fair complexion and sandy hair, well-shapen, light-footed ; the most conspicuous article in her attire was an ample checkered linen apron, which almost covered her skirt ; and nothing could be plainer or less noticeable than her cap and gown, for there was no weakness of which she was less tolerant than feminine vanity, and the preference of ornament to utility. The family likeness between her and her niece Dinah Morris, with the contrast between her keenness and Dinah's seraphic gentleness of expression, might have served a painter as an excellent suggestion for a Martha and Mary. Their eyes were just of the same colour, but a striking test of the difference in their operation was seen in the demeanour of Trip, the black-and-tan terrier, whenever that much-suspected dog unwarily exposed himself to the freezing arctic ray of Mrs. Poyser's glances. Her tongue was not less keen than her eye, and, whenever a damsel came within earshot, seemed to take up an unfinished lecture, as a barrel-organ takes up a tune, precisely at the point where it had left off.

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## CHAPTER IV.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

Born 1828 A.D. . . . . Died 1882 A.D.

DESPITE his unmixed Italian parentage, Rossetti has been always accepted as one of our greatest modern English artists, and his poetry springs unmistakably from the land of his birth and his adoption.

For Gabriele Rossetti and his wife had fled to England after the failure of the Neapolitan insurrection in 1821, and the painter, baptized Charles Gabriel Dante, was born in London. The elder Rossetti was himself a poet, critic, and politician of some mark in his own country, and from the first encouraged his son's ambition to be an artist.

He remained at King's College School from 1835 to 1843, and then definitely entered upon a regular training for his career, first at a private art academy, and afterwards at the Royal Academy Antique School. Leaving the studios in 1848, he exhibited his first picture, *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, during the following year, and seems to have almost immediately developed an enthusiasm for those ideals in art with which his name will always be inseparably associated.

Naturally gravitating, by many links of intellectual sympathy, to a group of artists, then young men like himself, but destined for almost equal celebrity, he inaugurated an artistic "movement" in union with Holman Hunt, Millais, and Burne-Jones, calling themselves "the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood."

But Rossetti was also intimate with Swinburne, William Morris, and George Meredith, under the stimulation of whose companionship his poetic powers found almost as early expression as his artistic. The "Brotherhood" soon started a magazine for the promulgation of their special tenets, and a number of *The Germ*, appearing in 1850, contained *The Blessed Damsel*, considerably revised in after years, but remaining the most popular, if not the greatest, of Rossetti's poems.

In the sister arts, of which, more conspicuously than any man of modern times, he became a master, Rossetti discovered the manner of expression best suited to his genius from the very first. Of those most intimately associated with his early days, many developed in directions strangely diverse; but, despite a certain unfortunate weakness in personal character, he never faltered from the aims of his youth, never materially modified his practice. Indeed, much of his finest poetical work was written in youth, before he was twenty-five, though circumstances delayed its publication.

In 1860 he married Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal, a

young and beautiful model whom Millais "painted for his Ophelia . . . Rossetti taught her to draw," we are told. "She used to be drawing while sitting to him. Her drawings were beautiful, but without force. They were feminine likenesses of his own." When, two years later, Mrs. Rossetti died from accidentally taking an overdose of laudanum, the stricken husband impulsively buried the whole of his poetical manuscripts in her coffin, and for nearly twenty years led the life of a recluse.

But Swinburne, George Meredith, and his brother William at different times shared his gloomy home in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea; and the influence of friends ultimately led to the recovery of his work, which he revised and published, under the title of *Poems*, in 1870.

Already regarded as the leader of a "school" of painters (freely satirized by their contemporaries, though now held in the greatest respect), the publication of this harmless and beautiful volume exposed Rossetti to the charge of having also founded an objectionable "school" of poets. Robert Buchanan's savage onslaught (honourably retracted twelve years later) on "the fleshly school of poetry," recalls the critical methods, now happily extinct, of certain early Victorian writers, and need not be dwelt upon here.

To some extent, however, it reflected the public feeling of the time, and was, no doubt, partially instrumental in confirming Rossetti's natural disinclination for publicity. Meantime mental depression, further increased by hostile criticism, had produced insomnia, and led him into the unfortunate habit of taking chloral to excess. His later years were much

1882 clouded by the inevitable consequences. Yet

A.D. the wonderful paintings betrayed no diminution of vigour; and he published another poetical collection, entitled *Ballads and Sonnets*, in 1881, as well as many noble translations in verse from the Italian. He died on Easter Day 1882.

We do not to-day find anything objectionable in Rossetti's poetry. The magic richness of colouring which distinguishes his painting stands out no less pre-eminent here. It inspires alike his imagination and his command of language. It is the same in ballad, lyric, or sonnet. The colouring is not vague, blotchy, or lacking in the sense of proportion, but perfectly subordinate to the finest artistic sense.

The limitations that must nevertheless be admitted in nearly all his work arise simply from that single-mindedness of purpose from which it derives beauty and strength. The artist ruled the man. Exquisitely chiselled in harmonious purity of diction, his poem-pictures yet lack the touch of human sympathy, the passionate, spontaneous emotion of the prophet. To him humanity and its visions are picturesque rather than joyous or tragic. It would almost seem as though he saw without feeling. But artistic powers of such magnificence, united to such exceptional gifts of expression, if they do not rise to the very throne of genius, produce true poetry which must live for ever.

#### THE BLESSED DAMOZEL.

The blessed damozel leaned out  
From the gold bar of heaven ;  
Her eyes were deeper than the depth  
Of waters stilled at even ;  
She had three lilies in her hand,  
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,  
No wrought flowers did adorn,  
But a white rose of Mary's gift,  
For service meetly worn ;  
Her hair that lay along her back  
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day  
One of God's choristers ;  
The wonder was not yet quite gone  
From that still look of hers ;  
Albeit, to them she left, her day  
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years  
. . . Yet now, and in this place,

Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair  
 Fell all about my face. . . .  
 Nothing : the autumn-fall of leaves.  
 The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house  
 That she was standing on ;  
 By Godbuilt over the sheer depth  
 The which is Space begun ;  
 So high, that looking downward thence  
 She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in heaven, across the flood  
 Of ether, as a bridge.  
 Beneath, the tides of day and night  
 With flame and darkness ridge  
 The void, as low as where this earth  
 Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met  
 'Mid deathless love's acclaims,  
 Spoke evermore among themselves  
 Their heart-remembered names ;  
 And the souls mounting up to God  
 Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped  
 Out of the circling charm ;  
 Until her bosom must have made  
 The bar she leaned on warm,  
 And the lilies lay as if asleep  
 Along her bended arm.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 "We two," she said, " will seek the groves  
 Where the lady Mary is,  
 With her five handmaidens, whose names  
 Are five sweet symphonies,  
 Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,  
 Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks  
 And foreheads garlanded ;  
 Into the fine cloth white like flame  
 Weaving the golden thread,  
 To fashion the birth-robcs for them  
 Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb :  
 Then will I lay my cheek  
 To his, and tell about our love,  
 Not once abashed or weak :  
 And the dear mother will approve  
 My pride, and let me speak.

“Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,  
 To Him round whom all souls  
 Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads  
 Bowed with their aureoles :  
 And angels meeting us shall sing  
 To their citherns and citoles.

“There will I ask of Christ the Lord  
 Thus much for him and me :—  
 Only to live as once on earth  
 With Love,—only to be,  
 As then awhile, for ever now  
 Together, I and he.”

She gazed and listened and then said,  
 Less sad of speech than mild,  
 “All this is when he comes.” She ceased.  
 The light thrilled towards her, fill’d  
 With angels in strong level flight.  
 Her eyes prayed, and she smil’d.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path  
 Was vague in distant spheres :  
 And then she cast her arms along  
 The golden barriers,  
 And laid her face between her hands,  
 And wept. (I heard her tears.)

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## CHAPTER V.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Born 1822 A.D. . . . . Died 1888 A.D.

THE son of Rugby’s most famous headmaster, and himself for many years one of her Majesty’s school inspectors, Matthew Arnold never entirely abandoned the didactic mannerisms of the pedagogue. As a poet he shared, in a measure, Clough’s mission as an apostle of doubt, and his literary criticisms largely formed the taste of his age. While students have always questioned his authority in particular cases, and the public no longer regard him as their dictator in culture, our final judgment of his position among men of letters must recognize his pre-eminence.

Born on December 24, 1822, at rustic Laleham, on



the banks of the Thames he loved so well, Arnold was educated first at Winchester, and afterwards under his father at Rugby. Here and at Oxford he won the prize for English verse, afterwards declaring that he himself considered the school poem better than that composed at college.

It was at Oxford, however, that the future development of his intellectual activities was most definitely determined; and the academic polish of all his work stands in remarkable contrast to his contempt for academic routine. The university of his day was deeply influenced by Goethe, Emerson, and Carlyle; still more intimately by "that spiritual apparition gliding in the dim afternoon light through the aisles of St. Mary's"—John Henry Newman. And Matthew Arnold, though seldom acceptable to the orthodox, was always essentially a religious poet—a careful artist for higher than art's sake.

Elected a fellow of Oriel in 1845, he did not leave Oxford till 1847, when he became private secretary to Lord Lansdowne; and ten years later he was appointed Professor of Poetry. His course of life outside his literary activities was, however, 1851 determined in 1851, the year of his marriage A.D. with the daughter of the late Justice Wightman, when he became an inspector of schools under the Education Department, retiring only a short time before his death.

Arnold's existence, in fact, was calm and untroubled throughout, admirably befitting the prophet of culture who, in solitude or in society, "saw life steadily and saw it whole." He travelled a little, read much, made many distinguished friends, and died suddenly, from an accidental heart strain, in April 1888.

Almost equally pre-eminent as a poet and as a writer of prose, Arnold's work is yet not hard to classify and differentiate. Like so many another master of style, he wrote most of his poetry in youth, and adopted the less exalted medium of expression for

the semi-philosophical comments on life and thought matured by experience.

The two volumes of his poetry, which appeared during his life, were both issued anonymously before he was thirty, *The Strayed Reveller* bearing the date 1849, and *Empedocles on Etna* that of 1852. We learn with surprise how coldly they were received by the critics, including a writer apparently so sympathetic as A. H. Clough. Yet the body of work, here offered the public by one but recently freed from the conventual atmosphere of college life, revealed a fortitude towards the problems of existence and a lofty spiritual atmosphere vital enough to secure their author's immortality. Nor is it alone remarkable for wisdom and sanity; the "strain of choral philosophy" in *Empedocles*, said Swinburne, is "a model of grave, clear, solemn verse;" the lyrics excel in "loveliness of sound and colour." His sonnets, like those of Milton scarce more than twenty in number, have been fearlessly placed on the level with the highest. As its classical form will always limit its popularity, there is perhaps only one essential quality lacking in Matthew Arnold's poetry—the note of joy. Had he written more verse in later manhood, maybe this too would have been given him.

Arnold's prose work, immediately recognized as a force in literature when he issued the collected volume of *Essays in Criticism* at the age of forty-three, naturally appealed to a wider public. Subject, thought, and style were alike almost startling in their originality. The methods of Sainte-Beuve, with whom his work was allied without being imitative, were even less familiar to his readers than they are to-day, and "the attempt to bring literature, ancient and modern, under a sort of comparative inspection, and to handle it from general points of view, was almost as novel as the special way in which it was done."

Moreover, the self-revelations of the author's personal idiosyncrasies were both frank and gracefully

humorous. His gentle air of refined superiority, his persistent bantering of the Philistines, arrested immediate attention and charmed away the first impulse to irritation. Cheerfully disdaining not merely the vulgar but the majority, he yet assumed the air of a man of the world with such convincing earnestness as to make us all feel at once that he must be perfectly in the right. The style, again, was singularly captivating. Mannered and polished to a degree, it yet seemed ever disclaiming the tricks of ornament ; while the elusive touch of lightness at once relieved and justified the sober English virtues of quietness and proportion, always practised and constantly extolled.

Having now caught the ear of the public, Matthew Arnold issued a series of volumes, covering a 1869 period of about ten years, which embodied his A.D. outlook on life generally, and had much influence on the thought of his generation. They occupy a sort of middle region between literature, religion, politics, and ethics, in the widest sense.

*Culture and Anarchy* (1869) was perhaps the most entirely characteristic. This was followed in 1870 by *St. Paul and Protestantism*, and in 1871 by *Friendship's Garland*, a satire in narrative form on the English middle classes. Then came *Literature and Dogma* (1873), perhaps the most widely known, and *Last Essays on Church and Religion* (1877).

To some extent Matthew Arnold caricatured the peculiar beauties of his own manner throughout these works. His elegant banter on serious topics was not always in perfect taste ; his irony towards the conventional seems occasionally affected or impertinent ; and in praise or blame he did not quite escape cant or comment that begged the question. He also exaggerated certain mechanical devices of style—in particular the repetition of pet phrases and a tendency to refrain ; and those who praise his invariable lucidity have said “ that the style indeed obscured nothing, but did not illuminate very much.”

These, however, are small blemishes indeed when weighed against the solid advance, so largely inspired by his work, towards general culture and an informed taste for literature. At his best, on his own subjects, he stands alone. He may almost be said to have created comparative criticism, and his genius in contrasting national and individual types has never been surpassed.

Returning, as in his *Mixed Essays* (1879) and in his *Irish Essays* (1882), to more purely literary topics, he seems to have silently conceded something to his critics and risen once more above the danger of playing with his own peculiar excellences. For elegance and charm, however self-conscious and elaborated, his style ranks among the most distinguished of our literature.

#### THE FORSAKEN MERMAN.

Come, dear children, let us away ;  
Down and away below !  
Now my brothers call from the bay,  
Now the great winds shoreward blow,  
Now the salt tides seaward flow ;  
Now the wild white horses play,  
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray—  
Children dear, let us away !  
This way, this way !

Call her once before you go—  
Call once yet !  
In a voice that she will know—  
“ Margaret ! Margaret ! ”  
Children’s voices should be dear  
(Call once more) to a mother’s ear ;  
Children’s voices, wild with pain—  
Surely she will come again !  
Call her once and come away ;  
This way, this way !  
“ Mother dear, we cannot stay !  
The wild white horses foam and fret.”  
Margaret ! Margaret !

Come, dear children, come away down ;  
Call no more !  
One last look at the white-wall’d town,  
And the little grey church on the windy shore ;  
Then come down !  
She will not come though you call all day ;  
Come away, come away !

Children dear, was it yesterday  
 We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?  
 In the caverns where we lay,  
 Through the surf and through the swell,  
 The far-off sound of a silver bell ?  
 Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,  
 Where the winds are all asleep ;  
 Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,  
 Where the salt weed sways in the stream,  
 Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,  
 Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground ;  
 Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,  
 Dry their mail and bask in the brine ;  
 Where great whales come sailing by,  
 Sail and sail, with unshut eye,  
 Round the world for ever and aye ?  
 When did music come this way ?  
 Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday  
 (Call yet once) that she went away ?  
 Once she sate with you and me,  
 On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,  
 And the youngest sate on her knee.  
 She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,  
 When down swung the sound of a far-off bell.  
 She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea ;  
 She said, " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray  
 In the little grey church on the shore to-day.  
 'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me !  
 And I lose my poor soul, Merman ! here with thee."  
 I said : " Go up, dear heart, through the waves ;  
 Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves !  
 She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.  
 Children dear, was it yesterday ?

\* \* \* \* \*

Come away, away, children ;  
 Come, children, come down !  
 The hoarse wind blows colder ;  
 Lights shine in the town.  
 She will start from her slumber  
 When gusts shake the door ;  
 She will hear the winds howling,  
 Will hear the waves roar.  
 We shall see, while above us  
 The waves roar and whirl,  
 A ceiling of amber,  
 A pavement of pearl.  
 Singing : " Here came a mortal,  
 But faithless was she !  
 And alone dwell for ever  
 The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,  
 When soft the winds blow,  
 When clear falls the moonlight,  
 When spring-tides are low ;  
 When sweet airs come seaward  
 From heaths starr'd with broom,  
 And high rocks throw mildly  
 On the blanch'd sands a gloom ;  
 Up the still, glistening beaches,  
 Up the creeks we will hie,  
 Over banks of bright seaweed  
 The ebb-tide leaves dry.  
 We will gaze, from the sand-hills,  
 At the white, sleeping town ;  
 At the church on the hill-side—  
 And then come back down.  
 Singing : " There dwells a loved one,  
 But cruel is she !  
 She left lonely for ever  
 The kings of the sea."

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### I AM A PHILISTINE.

(FROM "CULTURE AND ANARCHY.")

This is an experience which we may all verify every day. For instance, I myself (I again take myself as a sort of *corpus vile* to serve for illustration in a matter where serving for illustration may not by everyone be thought agreeable),—I myself am properly a Philistine,—Mr. Swinburne would add, the son of a Philistine. And although, through circumstances which will perhaps one day be known if ever the affecting history of my conversion comes to be written, I have, for the most part, broken with the ideas and the tea-meetings of my own class, yet I have not on that account, been brought much nearer to the ideas and works of the Barbarians or of the Populace. Nevertheless, I never take a gun or a fishing rod in my hands without feeling that I have in the ground of my nature the self-same seeds which, fostered by circumstances, do so much to make the Barbarian ; and that, with the Barbarian's advantages, I might have rivalled him. Place me in one of his great fortified posts, with these seeds of a love for field sports sown in my nature, with all the means of developing them, with all pleasures at my command, with most whom I met deferring to me, everyone I met smiling on me, and with every appearance of permanence and security before me and behind me,—then I too might have grown, I feel, into a very passable child of the established fact, of commendable spirit and politeness, and, at the same time, a little inaccessible to ideas and light ; not, of course, with either the eminent fine spirit of our type of aristocratic perfection, or the eminent turn for resistance of our type of aristocratic excess, but, according to the measure of the common run of mankind, something between the two. And as to the Populace, who, whether he be Barbarian or Philistine, can look at them without sympathy, when he remembers how often,—every time that we snatch up a vehement opinion in ignorance and



passion, every time that we long to crush an adversary by sheer violence, every time that we are envious, every time that we are brutal, every time that we adore mere power or success, every time that we add our voice to swell a blind clamour against some unpopular personage, every time that we trample savagely on the fallen,—he has found in his bosom the eternal spirit of the Populace, and that there needs only a little help from circumstances to make it triumph in him untamably ?

The second thing to be borne in mind I have indicated several times already. It is this. All of us, so far as we are Barbarians, Philistines, or Populace, imagine happiness to consist in doing what one's ordinary self likes. What one's ordinary self likes differs according to the class to which one belongs, and has its severer and lighter side ; always, however, remaining machinery, and nothing more. The graver self of the Barbarian likes honours and consideration ; his more relaxed self, field sports and pleasure. The graver self of one kind of Philistine likes fanaticism, business, and money-making ; his more relaxed self, comfort and tea-meetings. Of another kind of Philistine, the graver self likes rattening ; the relaxed self, deputations, or hearing Mr. Odger speak. The sterner self of the Populace likes bawling, hustling, and smashing ; the lighter self, beer. But in each class there are born a certain number of natures with a curiosity about their best self, with a bent for seeing things as they are, for disentangling themselves from machinery, for simply concerning themselves with reason and the will of God, and doing their best to make these prevail ;—for the pursuit, in a word, of perfection. To certain manifestations of this love for perfection mankind have accustomed themselves to give the name of genius ; implying by this name, something original and heaven-bestowed in the passion. But the passion is to be found far beyond those manifestations of it to which the world usually gives the name of genius, and in which there is, for the most part, a talent of some kind or other, a special and striking faculty of execution, informed by the heaven-bestowed ardour or genius. It is to be found in many manifestations besides these, and may best be called, as we have called it, the love and pursuit of perfection ; culture being the true nurse of the pursuing love, and sweetness and light the true character of the pursued perfection. Natures with this bent emerge in all classes,—among the Barbarians, among the Philistines, among the Populace. And this bent always tends to take them out of their class, and to make their distinguishing characteristic, not their Barbarianism or their Philistinism, but their humanity. They have, in general, a rough time of it in their lives ; but they are sown more abundantly than one might think, they appear where and when one least expects it, they set up a fire which enflames, so to speak, the class with which they are ranked ; and, in general, by the extrication of their best self as the self to develop, and by the simplicity of the ends fixed by them as paramount, they hinder the unchecked predominance of that class life which is the affirmation of our ordinary self, and seasonably disconcert mankind in their worship of machinery.

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## ENERGY IN LITERATURE.

(FROM "ESSAYS IN CRITICISM.")

Let me remark, however, that not only in the moral sphere, but also in the intellectual and spiritual sphere, energy and honesty are most important and fruitful qualities; that, for instance, of what we call genius energy is the most essential part. So, by assigning to a nation energy and honesty as its chief spiritual characteristics, — by refusing to it, as at all eminent characteristics, openness of mind and flexibility of intelligence, — we do not by any means, as some people might at first suppose, relegate its importance and its power of manifesting itself with effect from the intellectual to the moral sphere. We only indicate its probable special line of successful activity in the intellectual sphere, and, it is true, certain imperfections and failings to which, in this sphere, it will always be subject. Genius is mainly an affair of energy, and poetry is mainly an affair of genius; therefore, a nation whose spirit is characterised by energy may well be eminent in poetry; — and we have Shakespeare. Again, the highest reach of science is, one may say, an inventive power, a faculty of divination, akin to the highest power exercised in poetry; therefore, a nation whose spirit is characterised by energy may well be eminent in science; — and we have Newton. Shakespeare and Newton: in the intellectual sphere there can be no higher names. And what that energy, which is the life of genius, above everything demands and insists upon, is freedom; entire independence of all authority, prescription, and routine — the fullest room to expand as it will. Therefore, a nation whose chief spiritual characteristic is energy, will not be very apt to set up, in intellectual matters, a fixed standard, an authority, like an academy. By this it certainly escapes certain real inconveniences and dangers, and it can, at the same time, as we have seen, reach undeniably splendid heights in poetry and science. On the other hand, some of the requisites of intellectual work are specially the affair of quickness of mind and flexibility of intelligence. The form, the method of evolution, the precision, the proportion, the relation of the parts to the whole, in an intellectual work, depend mainly upon them. And these are the elements of an intellectual work which are really most communicable from it, which can most be learned and adopted from it, which have, therefore, the greatest effect upon the intellectual performance of others. Even in poetry, these requisites are very important; and the poetry of a nation, not eminent for the gifts on which they depend, will more or less suffer by this shortcoming. In poetry, however, they are, after all, secondary, and energy is the first thing; but in prose they are of first-rate importance. In its prose literature therefore, and in the routine of intellectual work generally, a nation with no particular gifts for these will not be so successful. These are what, as I have said, can to a certain degree be learned and appropriated, while the free activity of genius cannot. Academies consecrate and maintain them, and, therefore, a nation with an eminent turn for them naturally establishes academies. So far as routine and authority tend to embarrass energy and inventive genius, academies may be said to be obstructive to energy and inventive genius, and, to this extent, to the human spirit's general advance.

But then this evil is so much compensated by the propagation, on a large scale, of the mental aptitudes and demands which an open mind and a flexible intelligence naturally engender, genius itself, in the long run, so greatly finds its account in this propagation, and bodies like the French Academy have such power for promoting it, that the general advance of the human spirit is perhaps on the whole, rather furthered than impeded by their existence.

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## CHAPTER VI.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Born 1850 A.D. . . . . Died 1894 A.D.

THE best beloved and most personally fascinating of modern writers, Stevenson yet owes his position in literature to the purely artistic and studied beauties of his style. He never misplaced or misused a word, never neglected the turn of a sentence, at the most breathless moment of *Treasure Island* or in the simplest utterance of *A Child's Garden of Verses*. Yet he is always himself, without any obtrusiveness of egotism ; and as a man he is irresistible.

Stevenson was not destined by parental ambition for a literary career, nor have we any evidence of a transmitted genius for writing. His grandfather Robert built the Bell Rock lighthouse, his uncle Allan built Skerryvore, and his father Thomas was associated with many improvements in lighthouse apparatus. Louis himself studied mathematics and drawing, worked in a carpenter's shop, a brass foundry, and a wood-yard, and obtained a prize from the Society of Arts for certain proficiency in the "labour of his sires."

It was not, in fact, until he had attained his majority that the young man confessed to his unconquerable passion for letters. His ungrudging respect for the more practical pursuits of life found expression many years later in a fine essay inspired by his father's memory.

"Say not of me that weakly I declined  
The labours of my sires, and fled the sea,

The towers we founded, and the lamps we lit,  
To play at home with paper like a child."

It was now determined that Louis should read for the Bar, in order at least to avoid entire dependence on the uncertain rewards of authorship. After some delay, caused by the necessity for wintering at Mentone in search of health, he was actually called in 1875 ; but he never seriously practised.

For Stevenson literature never spelt idleness. He records that one short essay, *Ordered South* (reprinted in *Virginibus Puerisque*) took him nearly three months to write. " I imagine," he says, with singular humility, " nobody had ever such pains to learn a trade as I had ; but I slogged at it day in and day out, and I frankly believe (thanks to my dire industry) I have done more with smaller gifts than almost any man of letters in the world."

It is doubtful, of course, whether any man with " small gifts " could have done so much. Undoubtedly Stevenson was born with great literary talents, but his industry is none the less indisputable, and must count for much in the perfection of his genius.

To this, in fact, must be credited the maturity of his first book, *An Inland Voyage*, published in his twenty-ninth year, as well as the uniform distinction of all his subsequent work. His hand gathered strength and confidence every year ; but he never prosed, and left nothing slovenly.

Whether a more active profession, involving regular physical exertion " along the sounding coast," would have proved less injurious to his health than the continuous exercise of his imagination, can never be known. It seems improbable, however, since Stevenson always spent a great part of his life in the open air, and was able to travel wherever his health was said to dictate. It is certain, however, that he was hampered by pain and weakness throughout the greater part of his life, and died while yet a comparatively young man.

Indeed, a literal record of his life would consist of little more than a chronicle of visits to Bournemouth, Hyères, and other resorts of the invalid. The brilliant and picturesque impressions so liberally scattered about his essays and romances reveal a spirit ever conquering and profiting by reverses ; and the memories associated with his final exile in Samoa are in no sense valetudinarian. Here he became a white chief, honoured with reverent affection by the natives, with whose child-wonder he had so much subtle sympathy ; and at other times intervened, not altogether ineffectually, in the mess of international mercantile politics.

“ To the Samoan mind,” says his step-son, “ he was inordinately rich, and many of them believe in the bottom of their hearts that the story of the bottle-imp was no fiction, but a tangible fact. Mr. Stevenson was a resident, a considerable landowner, a man like themselves, with taro-swamps, banana plantations, and a Samoan ‘ aiga ’ or family. He was no official with a hired house, here to-day with specious goodwill on his lips, and empty promises, but off to-morrow in the mail steamer to that vague region called ‘ papa ligi ’ or the white country. He knew Samoan etiquette, and was familiar with the baser as well as the better side of the native character. He was cautiously generous after the fashion of the country, and neither excited covetousness by undue prodigality, nor failed to respond in a befitting way for favours received.”

It was exile indeed, as every one of his beautiful letters proves beyond cavil, but an exile shared and lightened by the companionship of those most dear to him. Of his marriage with Mrs. Van de Grift Osbourne and its happy consequences it is not now becoming to write at length.

Stevenson’s output, covering little more than twelve years, was brilliant and copious. However varied in form, his work throws the same light upon common objects, and always convinces by his hold on the

ultimate conditions of human life. "Romance, or what is happening round the next turn of the road and beyond the next bend of the river, was the lode-star" of his imagination.

*Treasure Island* (1883), *Kidnapped* (1886), *Catriona* (1893), and other volumes must fascinate all who love the stirring paths of heroic adventure. Alan Breck has been called "the finest Highlander in English literature," and the rival heroines of *Catriona* are hard to match. *Prince Otto* (1885) was surely the father of all Mr. Anthony Hope's "historical" romances; while *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) has had a hundred imitators.

"That lurid embodiment of fascinating evil," *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889), may be regarded as his most solid achievement in fiction, though the posthumous and somewhat baffling *Weir of Hermiston* (1897) has almost equal power. In the unfinished *St. Ives* (completed by Mr. A. T. Quiller-Couch and issued in 1897), he returned to Scotland and to pure adventure.

Many readers, however, consider his short tales more characteristic, as they are certainly almost flawless. Of these, perhaps *The New Arabian Nights* (1882)—surely the most fantastic exercise of the imagination ever penned—and *The Island Nights Entertainments* (1893)—inspired by the superstitions of Samoa—are the best.

The essay volumes, indeed, are no less romantic, whether written as general reflections of life, like *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881); as literary criticism, like *Familiar Studies of Men and Books* (1882), and *Memories and Portraits* (1887); or as records of travel, like *An Inland Voyage* (1878), *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes* (1879), and *Across the Plains* (1892).

Stevenson also produced four plays—*Deacon Brodie*, *Beau Austin*, *Admiral Guinea*, and *Macaire* (with W. E. Henley), which have been performed with applause—and a good deal of charming, quite unprofessional poetry—*Underwoods* (1887), *Ballads* (1891)—



“written not for fame and scarcely for art, but rather for the sake of love and friendship.” The little volume, *A Child's Garden of Verses* (1885), is unique in English literature. Nowhere else, either by ancients or moderns, have the thoughts and feelings of childhood been so perfectly mirrored with such perfect art. The verse is altogether exquisite, but the words are the words of infancy.

Indeed the same spirit may be found in all he wrote, despite its wholesome manliness, its subtle fancy, and its finished style. “His attitude towards the business and desire of grown men had always something of the child's open-eyed wonder ; he was to the last a stranger upon earth.”

It has been well said that “the supreme and splendid characteristic of Stevenson was his levity, and his levity was the flower of a hundred grave philosophies.”

#### WHERE GOD KEEPS OPEN HOUSE.

(FROM “TRAVELS WITH A DONKEY.”)

A faint wind, more like a moving coldness than a stream of air, passed down the glade from time to time ; so that even in my great chamber the air was being renewed all night long. I thought with horror of the inn at Chasserades and the congregated nightcaps ; with horror of the nocturnal prowesses of clerks and students, of hot theatres and pass-keys and close rooms. I have not often enjoyed a more serene possession of myself, nor felt more independent of material aids. The outer world, from which we cower into our houses, seemed after all a gentle habitable place ; and night after night a man's bed, it seemed, was laid and waiting for him in the fields, where God keeps an open house. I thought I had rediscovered one of those truths which are revealed to savages and hid from political economists : at the least I had discovered a new pleasure for myself. And yet even while I was exulting in my solitude I became aware of a strange lack. I wished a companion to be near me in the starlight, silent and not moving, but ever within touch. For there is a fellowship more quiet even than solitude, and which, rightly understood, is solitude made perfect. And to live out of doors with the woman a man loves is of all lives the most complete and free.

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#### REQUIEM.

Under the wide and starry sky,  
Dig the grave and let me lie.  
Glad did I live and gladly die,  
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me :  
*Here he lies where he longed to be ;*  
*Home is the sailor, home from sea,*  
*And the hunter home from the hill.*

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## CHAPTER VII.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

Born 1834 A.D. . . . . Died 1896 A.D.

WILLIAM MORRIS—poet, furniture-maker, printer, and Socialist—exerted a curiously varied influence on the latter half of the nineteenth century. Belonging, in literature and in art, to a school which has always been rather select than popular, and engaged during the greater part of his busy life in the production of articles consciously designed for the very wealthy, he yet succeeded in forcing certain canons of taste right into the cheapest villas of suburbia, and reached the mob by street preaching on social topics.

Though always eager to “make everything something different from what it was,” William Morris, “without ever once swerving from truth or duty, knew what he liked and did what he liked all his life long.”

Born at Walthamstow on March 24, 1834, he was educated at Marlborough and Exeter College, Oxford, where he met Burne-Jones, and came under the influence of Ruskin and Tennyson. In 1856 he was apprenticed to George Edmund Street, the famous architect, and though he never completed his articles, remained “from first to last the architect, the master craftsman.” He always maintained that architecture “connected at a thousand points with all the specific arts which ministered to it out of a thousand sources, was itself the tangible expression of all the order, the comeliness, the sweetness—nay, even the mystery and the law—which sustain man’s world and make

human life what it is. To him the House Beautiful represented the visible form of life itself."

Yet despite his varied and practical activities, Morris became a copious writer of verse and prose in his youth, and never laid down his pen. He was one of the founders of *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, supplying also much of the matter for the twelve numbers which appeared during 1856. Two years later appeared *The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems*, an extraordinarily mature "first work," heralding that intuitive sympathy with mediævalism which characterized all his later achievements. It

1867 was not, however, until nine years later that A.D. the appearance of *The Life and Death of Jason* established his reputation as a master of poet story-tellers. From 1868 to 1870 he was issuing that treasure-house of lovely tales, with lyric interludes, entitled *The Earthly Paradise*, probably his greatest work. *Jason* and much of *The Earthly Paradise* were written in the metres of Chaucer, while the tales are mainly Greek or Northern, and only in one or two cases drawn from the East.

Meanwhile Morris had been literally revelling in the simple yet most craftsmanlike narratives of Islandic literature, from which he contributed several translations in prose and verse to different periodicals, leading up to that marvellous original poem, *Love is Enough* (1873), composed in the old alliterative measures.

In 1875 he published *The Æncids of Virgil done into English Verse* of the ballad metre employed in Chapman's *Iliad*; and twelve years later he also translated *The Odyssey* in the anapæstic couplets of his own saga poems. Morris belonged to an age in which accurate scholarship counted for far more than in Chapman's days, and it may be doubted whether these renderings do not stand alone as being at once faithful to the sense of the originals, and poetic literature of the first class.

It has been contended, with considerable justification, that in *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung* (1876), the poet, without shedding his mediævalism, first raises large spiritual questions, betraying a profound interest in the destinies of humanity, certainly foreign to the mere story-teller. The typical saviour, as conceived by the elder Northmen, is treated in the spirit of the moderns; and it is unquestionably an actual fact that henceforward Morris became every year more absorbed in social reform. To him the evils of commercialism were revealed through their effects in the degradation of art, and his own efforts were largely directed towards the revival of honest and independent craftsmanship. However frankly we acknowledge the strange lack of moral and spiritual imagination in his outlook, it cannot for one moment be denied that the Socialism so eloquently upheld by William Morris was eminently practical and essentially altruistic. Personally he had nothing to gain by reform, yet he devoted himself with enthusiasm to an ideal of public welfare, stirred by human suffering.

During the ten years between 1878 and 1888 he issued some twenty socio-political tracts and tales, varying in length and merit; while the editorship of *The Commonweal*, largely maintained at 1888 his own expense, began in 1885, and was not A.D. relinquished till 1890. Undoubtedly Socialist literature of those days depended mainly on his pen, while his *Dream of John Ball* (1888) was a truly novel piece of propagandism.

The practice in controversy and exposition thus acquired seems to have directed our author's genius to the artistic possibilities of prose; for his next original work, *A Tale of the House of the Wolfings and all the Kindreds of Mark*, which appeared in 1889, is only partly written in verse. This romantic mingling of legend and tribal history has been described as "a wholly new thing in English prose fiction," and its companion, *The Roots of the Mountains, wherein is*

told somewhat of the *Lives of the Men of Burgdale, their Friends, their Neighbours, their Foemen, and their Fellows in Arms* (1890), though less poetically exalted, has the compensating advantage of a very human love motive treated with perfect sympathy and masculine vigour. In both works the persons, the places, the costumes, and the battles are rendered with extraordinary fidelity and dramatic fire.

To his latest years belong various Socialist pamphlets; that romantic legend, *The Glittering Plain* (1890); *News from Nowhere, or an Epoch of Rest, being some Chapters from an Utopian Romance* (1891), with its portrait of the ideal woman; and other poems, tales, or addresses; while not long before the end, he also entered, with Mr. Magnússon, upon a great undertaking in translation from the Icelandic—*The Saga Library*, to which he personally contributed several noteworthy volumes.

For him truly the visions of youth never faded. "He but passed from one beautiful dream to another, from a dream of the golden, mythical past to a dream of the golden possible future."

Though it has been impossible in one brief chapter even to enumerate the titles of all the books written by Morris, and though we have only alluded in passing to his numerous pamphlets, it remains to notice how many and various were the practical channels through which his extraordinary energy left its mark on the world.

Trained as a painter, and among moderns unrivalled in illuminating—trained as an architect, and always devoted to the "preservation of ancient buildings"—Morris was for many years the main organizing spirit of the Socialist league, and at different periods of his life founded two extensive business undertakings which were conspicuously successful.

On leaving Street's office he had taken a leading part in the foundation of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner, and Co., a firm of art decorators, soon conducted under

the poet's name only, which, though inspired by somewhat quixotic ambitions towards reforming public taste, quickly developed into a sound commercial establishment exerting a unique influence upon his generation. Morris colours and Morris designs, rising from the ashes of the pre-Raphaelites and of so-called æstheticism, are now accepted as practically synonymous with good taste. The theories in decoration on which they were based have left their mark on every department of domestic furniture and ornament. Scarcely less pre-eminent in its own line was the great Kelmscott Press, not started till his fifty-eighth year, which set a new standard in printing, and has partially revolutionized the style of even commercially produced books. His own work here was from the first acknowledged to be beyond price.

It would indeed be difficult to estimate the full extent of his power in forcing the rare and the beautiful upon the notice of a society steeped in commercialism and worshipping machinery. Morris realized, as it is seldom given us to realize, the dream of his soul to be, "though men call you dead, a part and parcel of the living wisdom of all things."

#### A TALE OF THE HAUBERK.

(FROM "THE HOUSE OF THE WOLFINGS.")

Hear then the tale of the Hauberk and the truth there is to tell:  
 There was a maid of the God-kin, and she loved a man right well,  
 Who unto the battle was wending; and she of her wisdom knew  
 That thence to the folk-hall threshold should come back but a  
     very few;  
 And she feared for her love, for she doubted that of these he should  
     not be;  
 So she wended the wilds lamenting, as I have lamented for thee;  
 And many wise she pondered, how to bring her will to pass  
 (E'en as I for thee have pondered), as her feet led over the grass,  
 Till she lifted her eyes in the wild-wood, and lo! she stood before  
 The Hall of the Hollow-places; and the Dwarf-lord stood in the door  
 And held in his hand the Hauberk, whereon the hammer's blow  
 The last of all had been smitten, and the sword should be hammered  
     now.  
 Then the Dwarf beheld her fairness, and the wild-wood many-  
     leaved  
 Before his eyes was reeling at the hope his heart conceived;



So sorely he longed for her body ; and he laughed before her and cried,

“ O Lady of the Disir, thou farest wandering wide  
Lamenting thy beloved and the folk-mote of the spear,  
But if amidst the battle this child of the hammer he bear  
He shall laugh at the foemen’s edges and come back to thy lily  
breast,

And of all the days of his life-time shall his coming years be best.”  
Then she bowed adown her godhead and sore for the Hauberk she  
prayed ;

But his greedy eyes devoured her as he stood in the door and said :  
“ Come lie in mine arms ! Come hither, and we twain the night to  
wake !

And then as a gift of the morning the Hauberk shall ye take.”  
So she humbled herself before him, and entered into the cave,  
The dusky, the deep-gleaming, the gem-strewn golden grave.  
But he saw not her girdle loosened, or her bosom gleam on his love,  
For she set the sleep-thorn in him, that he saw, but might not  
move,

Though the bitter salt tears burned him for the anguish of his greed ;  
And she took the hammer’s offspring, her unearned morning meed,  
And went her ways from the rock-hall and was glad for her warrior’s  
sake.

But behind her dull speech followed, and the voice of the hollow  
spake :

“ Thou hast left me bound in anguish, and hast gained thine heart’s  
desire ;

Now I would that the dewy night-grass might be to thy feet as  
the fire,

And shrivel thy raiment about thee, and leave thee bare to the  
flame,

And no way but a fiery furnace for the road whereby ye came !

But since the folk of God-home we may not slay nor smite,

And that fool of the folk that thou lovest, thou hast saved in my  
despite,

Take with thee, thief of God-home, this other word I say :

Since the safeguard wrought in the ring-mail I may not do away,

I lay this curse upon it, that whoso weareth the same,

Shall save his life in the battle, and have the battle’s shame ;

He shall live through wrack and ruin, and ever have the worse,

And drag adown his kindred, and bear the people’s curse.”

Lo, this is the tale of the Hauberk, and I know it for the truth :

And little I thought of the kindreds ; of their day I had no ruth ;

For I said, They are doomed to departure ; in a little while must  
they wane,

And nought it helpeth or hindreth if I hold my hand or refrain.

Yea, thou wert become the kindred, both thine and mine ; and  
thy birth

To me was the roofing of heaven, and the building up of earth.

I have loved, and I must sorrow ; thou hast lived, and thou must  
die ;

Ah, wherefore were there others in the world than thou and I ?

(*By permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green, and Co.*)



MATTHEW ARNOLD.



## THE MARCH OF THE WORKERS.

What is this, the sound and rumour? What is this that all men  
hear,

Like the wind in hollow valleys when the storm is drawing near,  
Like the rolling on of ocean in the eventide of fear?

'Tis the people marching on.

Whither go they, and whence come they? What are these of  
whom ye tell?

In what country are they dwelling 'twixt the gates of heaven and  
hell?

Are they mine or thine for money? Will they serve a master well?  
Still the rumour's marching on.

Hark the rolling of the thunder!

Lo the sun! and lo thereunder

Riseth wrath, and hope, and wonder,

And the host comes marching on.

Forth they come from grief and torment; on they wend toward  
health and mirth,

All the wide world is their dwelling, every corner of the earth.

Buy them, sell them for thy service! Try the bargain what 'tis  
worth,

For the days are marching on.

These are they who build thy houses, weave thy raiment, win thy  
wheat,

Smooth the rugged, fill the barren, turn the bitter into sweet,

All for thee this day—and ever. What reward for them is meet?

Till the host comes marching on.

Hark the rolling, etc.

Many a hundred years passed over have they laboured deaf and  
blind;

Never tidings reached their sorrow, never hope their toil might  
find.

Now at last they've heard and hear it, and the cry comes down  
the wind,

And their feet are marching on.

O ye rich men, hear and tremble! for with words the sound is rife:

"Once for you and death we laboured; changed henceforward is  
the strife.

We are men, and we shall battle for the world of men and life;

And our host is marching on."

Hark the rolling, etc.

"Is it war, then? Will ye perish as the dry wood in the fire?

Is it peace? Then be ye of us, let your hope be our desire.

Come and live! for life awaketh, and the world shall never tire;

And hope is marching on."

On we march then, we the workers, and the rumour that ye hear  
Is the blended sound of battle and deliv'rance drawing near;  
For the hope of every creature is the banner that we bear,  
And the world is marching on.

Hark the rolling, etc.

(By permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green, and Co.)

From "*Chants for Socialists*," published at Socialist League Office  
13 Farringdon Road, 1885.

## CHAPTER VIII.

HERBERT SPENCER.

Born 1820 A.D. . . . . Died 1903 A.D.

THE name of Herbert Spencer must for ever be associated, no less intimately than that of Darwin, with the discovery of evolution—perhaps the most revolutionary conception ever forced upon the human mind. Its consequences extend to every possible branch of thought and action, colouring the entire intellectual horizon of the nineteenth century. What Darwin established by an overwhelming mass of material evidence, and, in a sense, interpreted to the popular understanding, Spencer deduced by philosophical speculation, and applied to political, social, ethical, and religious problems. "His life-work has been to trace the evolutionary process from star to soul."

There is no occasion to trouble ourselves concerning the claims to priority between those who were never rivals; but undoubtedly the appeal in Spencer's generalizations was limited to his fellow-philosophers, and only received general acceptance through the influence of Darwinian research.

Herbert Spencer was born at Derby on April 27, 1820, and privately educated. He did not get on at school, and never went to the university. After a brief experience as an assistant schoolmaster, his father's profession, he passed eight years as a civil

engineer in the service of the London and Birmingham Railways. He contributed several papers to *The Civil Engineer Journal*, and invented a little instrument, called the velocimeter, for calculating the speed of locomotive engines.

But in 1845, his twenty-sixth year, the reaction following upon the great railway mania suddenly checked any large demand for new lines, and young Spencer was thrown out of employment. Before the end came he had begun the struggle for literary fame, and faced poverty. His home letters are sent off unstamped because "he had not a penny in his pocket;" his Sundays were spent indoors because he "had not a pair of trousers fit to go out in;" his literary earnings amounted to 7s. 6d., the reward for correcting another man's manuscripts. His father sent him a five-pound note that he might return to Derby.

The youth had written: "I am still as confident as ever that I could make my way as a literary character if I could once get a start, and I think you will agree with me in that belief." The fact is that his articles on "The Proper Sphere of Government" (contributed to *The Nonconformist* in 1842) showed remarkable promise, and the elder Spencer had always trusted the spontaneity of nature. He refused to force his son into any artificial groove, encouraged his leanings towards journalism, and certainly welcomed the offer which reached Herbert in 1848, "to take the position of sub-editor of *The Economist* newspaper." There our philosopher remained for five years, setting his foot on the steep ladder of fame.

Spencer's first book, *Social Statics*, appeared in 1850, while he was still in the office of *The Economist*. Here he attempts "to base his 1850 practical views of the nature and scope of A.D. Government on a coherent set of first principles." This was followed by various essays, afterwards collected — *The Philosophy of Style* (1852), *Manners and Fashions* (1854), and others, partly



illustrating Von Baer's formula "that all organic development is a change from the state of homogeneity to heterogeneity."

Spencer never consciously started with any vast cosmical theory. He began with fact, until, as he himself has stated, "there suddenly arose in him the conception that the law he had separately recognized in various groups of phenomena was a universal law, applying to the whole cosmos; the many small inductions were merged in the large inductions. And only after this largest induction had been formed did there arise the question, Why? . . . Only then did there arise the idea of developing the whole of the universal transformation from the persistence of force. . . . On the one hand I was never content with any truth remaining in the inductive form. On the other hand, I was never content with allowing a deductive interpretation to go unverified by reference to the facts."

Having secured a certain number of good friends through his editorial labours, and already recognized by the few as a great thinker, Spencer did not enter upon what was destined to become his life-work altogether without sympathy and encouragement. But he was always in poor health; he was driven to publish at his own expense books of which he could only sell about fifty copies in the course of a whole year. He reckons that he had lost nearly £1,200 in fifteen years, and only an accidental accession of property enabled him to continue his work. Twenty-four years were spent in solitary intellectual labour before he found his reward.

He had set himself to wrestle with the great mysteries of existence, beginning with *The Principles of*  
 1860 *Psychology* (1855), and in 1860, when forty years  
 A.D. of age, announcing his colossal scheme for a new  
 theory of the cosmos, from its earliest nebular  
 manifestations to its highest development in man and  
 civilization.

*The System of Synthetic Philosophy*, thus quixotic-

ally undertaken, was, however, destined to attain its glorious completion. *First Principles* (1862) was followed by *The Principles of Biology*, which occupied from 1864 to 1867. Then came the *Principles of Sociology* in three volumes: *Ceremonial Institutions*, *Political Institutions*, *Ecclesiastical Institutions*; and the *Principles of Ethics* (1879-93).

"One who devotes himself to grave literature," says Spencer, "must be content to remain celibate;" and, in fact, the history of his life may be found in his books, supplemented by *The Autobiography*. When the great system of philosophy had been finished, he retired to Brighton, and occupied his remaining years in revising its exposition and supplementing its main theses in various directions.

To a large extent Spencer has unified knowledge. The object of his numerous works is to trace the law of evolution through the various branches of phenomena—organic, super-organic, psychologic, and sociologic. He has been erroneously called a materialist, for, as he says himself, "in all directions the philosopher's investigations bring him face to face with the unknowable. . . . He feels, with a vividness which no other can, the utter incomprehensibleness of the simplest fact in itself. He alone *sees* that absolute knowledge is impossible. He *knows* that under all things lies an impenetrable mystery." It has, in fact, been claimed that, in combating empiricism, Spencer "cleared the ground for a theistic conception of the universe."

Experts to-day are not disposed to accept Spencer's message in its entirety; he is not regarded as academically sound. But his influence on his own generation was profound and far-reaching, and with the public remains intact. Unquestionably the man himself stands with the immortals.

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF STYLE.

(FROM "ESSAYS: SCIENTIFIC, POLITICAL, AND SPECULATIVE.")

No general theory of expression seems yet to have been enunciated. The maxims contained in works on composition and rhetoric are

presented in an unorganized form. Standing as isolated dogmas—as empirical generalizations, they are neither so clearly apprehended, nor so much respected, as they would be were they deduced from some simple first principle. We are told that “brevity is the soul of wit.” We hear styles condemned as verbose or involved. Blair says that every needless part of a sentence “interrupts the description and clogs the image;” and again, that “long sentences fatigue the reader’s attention.” It is remarked by Lord Kaimes, that “to give the utmost force to a period, it ought, if possible, to be closed with the word that makes the greatest figure.” That parentheses should be avoided and that Saxon words should be used in preference to those of Latin origin, are established precepts. But, however influential the truths thus dogmatically embodied, they would be much more influential if reduced to something like scientific ordination. In this, as in other cases, conviction will be greatly strengthened when we understand the *why*. And we may be sure that a comprehension of the general principle from which the rules of composition result, will not only bring them home to us with greater force, but will discover to us other rules of like origin.

On seeking for some clue to the law underlying these current maxims, we may see shadowed forth in many of them, the importance of economizing the reader’s or hearer’s attention. To so present ideas that they may be apprehended with the least possible mental effort, is the desideratum towards which most of the rules above quoted point. When we condemn writing that is wordy, or confused, or intricate—when we praise this style as easy, and blame that as fatiguing, we consciously or unconsciously assume this desideratum as our standard of judgment. Regarding language as an apparatus of symbols for the conveyance of thought, we may say that, as in a mechanical apparatus, the more simple and the better arranged its parts, the greater will be the effect produced. In either case, whatever force is absorbed by the machine is deducted from the result. A reader or listener has at each moment but a limited amount of mental power available. To recognize and interpret the symbols presented to him, requires part of this power; to arrange and combine the images suggested requires a further part: and only that part which remains can be used for realizing the thought conveyed. Hence, the more time and attention it takes to receive and understand each sentence, the less time and attention can be given to the contained idea; and the less vividly will that idea be conceived.

How truly language must be regarded as a hindrance to thought, though the necessary instrument of it, we shall clearly perceive on remembering the comparative force with which simple ideas are communicated by signs. To say, “Leave the room,” is less expressive than to point to the door. Placing a finger on the lips is more forcible than whispering, “Do not speak.” A beck of the hand is better than, “Come here.” No phrase can convey the idea of surprise so vividly as opening the eyes and raising the eyebrows. A shrug of the shoulders would lose much by translation into words. Again, it may be remarked that when oral language is employed, the strongest effects are produced by interjections, which condense entire sentences into syllables. And in other cases, where custom allows us to express thoughts by single words, as in *Beware, Heigho, Fudge*,

much force would be lost by expanding them into specific propositions. Hence, carrying out the metaphor that language is the vehicle of thought, there seems reason to think that in all cases the friction and inertia of the vehicle deduct from its efficiency; and that in composition, the chief, if not the sole thing to be done, is, to reduce this friction and inertia to the smallest possible amount. Let us then inquire whether economy of the recipient's attention is not the secret of effect, alike in the right choice and collocation of words, in the best arrangement of clauses in a sentence, in the proper order of its principal and subordinate propositions, in the judicious use of simile, metaphor, and other figures of speech, and even in the rhythmical sequence of syllables.

### THE RHYTHM OF MOTION.

(FROM "FIRST PRINCIPLES.")

When the pennant of a vessel lying becalmed shows the coming breeze, it does so by gentle undulations which travel from its fixed to its free end. Presently the sails begin to flap; and their blows against the mast increase in rapidity as the breeze rises. Even when, being fully bellied out, they are in great part steadied by the strain of the yards and cordage, their free edges tremble with each stronger gust. And should there come a gale, the jar that is felt on laying hold of the shrouds shows that the rigging vibrates; while the whistle of the wind proves that in it, also, rapid undulations are generated. Ashore the conflict between the current of air and the things it meets results in a like rhythmical action. The leaves all shiver in the blast; each branch oscillates; and every exposed tree sways to and fro. The blades of grass and dried bents in the meadows, and still better the stalks in the neighbouring corn-fields, exhibit the same rising and falling movements. Nor do the more stable objects fail to do the like, though in a less manifest fashion; as witness the shudder that may be felt throughout a house during the paroxysms of a violent storm. Streams of water produce in opposing objects the same general effects as do streams of air. Submerged weeds growing in the middle of a brook, undulate from end to end. Branches brought down by the last flood, and left entangled at the bottom where the current is rapid, are thrown into a state of up and down movement that is slow or quick in proportion as they are large or small; and where, as in great rivers like the Mississippi, whole trees are thus held, the name "sawyers," by which they are locally known, sufficiently describes the rhythm produced in them. Note, again, the effect of the antagonism between the current and its channel. In shallow places, where the action of the bottom on the water flowing over it is visible, we see a ripple produced—a series of undulations. If we study the action and reaction going on between the moving fluid and its banks, we still find the principle illustrated, though in a different way. For in every rivulet, as in the mapped-out course of every great river, the bends of the stream from side to side throughout its tortuous course constitute a lateral undulation—an undulation so inevitable that even an artificially-straightened channel is eventually changed into a serpentine one. Kindred phenomena may be observed when the water is stationary and the

solid matter moving. A stick drawn laterally through the water with much force, proves by the throb which it communicates to the hand that it is in a state of vibration. Even where the moving body is massive, it only requires that great force should be applied to get a sensible effect of like kind : instance the screw of a screw-steamer (of the primitive type), which instead of a smooth rotation falls into a rapid rhythm that sends a tremor through the whole vessel. The sound produced when a bow is drawn over a violin-string, shows us vibrations accompanying the movement of a solid over a solid. In lathes and planing machines, the attempt to take off a thick shaving causes a violent jar of the whole apparatus, and the production of a series of waves on the iron or wood that is cut. Every boy in scraping his slate-pencil finds it scarcely possible to help making a ridged surface. If you roll a ball along the ground or over the ice, there is always more or less up and down movement—a movement that is visible while the velocity is considerable, but becomes too small and rapid to be seen by the unaided eye as the velocity diminishes. However smooth the rails, and however perfectly built the carriages, a railway-train inevitably acquires oscillations, both lateral and vertical. Even where a moving mass is suddenly arrested by collision, the law is still illustrated ; for both the body striking and the body struck are made to tremble ; and trembling is rhythmical movement. Little as we habitually observe it, it is yet certain that the impulses our actions impress from moment to moment on surrounding objects, are propagated through them in vibrations. It needs but to look through a telescope of high power, placed on a table, to be convinced that each pulsation of the heart gives a jar to surrounding things. Motions of another order—those namely of the ethereal medium—teach us the same thing. Every fresh discovery confirms the hypothesis that light consists of undulations, and that the rays of heat have a like fundamental nature : their undulations differing from those of light only in their comparative lengths. Nor do the movements of electricity fail to furnish us with illustrations ; though of a different order. The northern aurora may often be observed to pulsate with waves of greater brightness ; and the electric discharge through a vacuum shows by its stratified appearance that the current is not uniform, but comes in gushes of greater and lesser intensity. Should it be said that there are some motions, as those of projectiles, which are not rhythmical, the reply is that the exception is apparent only, and that these motions would be rhythmical if they were not interrupted. It is common to assert that the trajectory of a cannon ball is a parabola ; and it is true that (omitting atmospheric resistance) the curve described differs so slightly from a parabola that it may practically be regarded as one. But, strictly speaking, it is a portion of an extremely eccentric ellipse, having the Earth's centre of gravity for its remoter focus ; and but for its arrest by the substance of the Earth, the cannon ball would travel round that focus and return to the point whence it started ; again to repeat this slow rhythm. Indeed, while seeming to do the reverse, the discharge of a cannon furnishes one of the best illustrations of the principle enunciated. The explosion produces violent undulations in the surrounding air. The whizz of the shot, as it flies towards its mark, is due to another series of atmospheric undulations. And the eccentric movement







ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

*(Photo by H. Walter Barnett.)*

round the Earth's centre, which the cannon ball is beginning to perform, being checked by solid matter, is transformed into a rhythm of another order; namely, the vibration which the blow sends through neighbouring bodies.

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## CHAPTER IX.

GEORGE MEREDITH.

Born 1828 A.D. . . . . Died 1909 A.D.

THOUGH for many years regarded as the high priest of obscurity in prose, and recognized only by the few as a master in fiction, Meredith lived long enough to become a classic, and now stands before the world an acknowledged master.

He was born in Hampshire on February 12, 1828, and, though partly educated in Germany, spent the greater part of his life among the hills of Surrey. He married the daughter of Thomas Love Peacock, and the influence of that somewhat erratic genius may be detected in his early work. From time to time he stepped, with the authority of a prophet, into the arena of literary or political controversy; but our only concern here must be with the record of his literary achievement.

Though pre-eminent as a novelist, Meredith's first venture, in his twenty-third year, was a slim volume of *Poems*, and he never altogether abandoned the art of writing verse. But the book secured little attention and maybe the temporary discouragement turned his attention to prose—to our undying gratitude.

*The Shaving of Shagpat* (1855) and *Farina: a Legend of Cologne* (1857) were, however, scarcely more popular, and have never been widely read. The first may be described as burlesquing *The Arabian Nights* in a whimsically imaginative fashion; in the second he submitted German romantic fiction to similar treatment.

But *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, published only two years after *Farina*, when its author was thirty-one, is eminently characteristic, and contains 1859 some of his finest work. Meredith's peculiar A.D. qualities had now found expression in a story of supreme dramatic interest, sparkling with wit and rich in the most subtle analysis of character. It has been said by Stevenson that no love-scene in fiction ever surpassed or approached the early meetings of Richard Feverel and Lucy Desborough.

Two years later came *Evan Harrington*, in which the inimitable Countess reaches the high-water mark in humour, as the heroine stands supreme among typical English maidens. *Emilia in England* (afterwards called *Sandra Belloni*) was published in 1864, and its sequel, *Vittoria*, in 1866. Here Meredith disclosed that intimate and passionate sympathy with Italian patriotism to which he has elsewhere given such noble expression, and essayed a study of the artistic temperament.

*Rhoda Fleming*, surely the most remorseless picture of a broken heart ever imagined, came between these volumes, which were followed by *The Adventures of Harry Richmond* in 1871, and *Beauchamp's Career* in 1875. The former, perhaps, exhibits certain fantastic or whimsical qualities in the author's humour at their height ; while the latter, though somewhat more conventional in plot, contains a masterly revelation of three feminine types equally attracting one man. In 1879 *The Egoist, a Comedy in Narrative*, excited a controversy not yet determined among its author's admirers. By some readers this unique analysis of temperament is regarded as his greatest achievement. Others, yielding to none in their enthusiasm for the rest of his work, have pronounced it his one failure. It certainly stands alone. Informed throughout by the most persistent and the most pointed satire, it is deliberately concentrated upon the presentation of a hero, the centre of his own world, who exhibits no

single trait of unselfishness or thought for others, and yet never loses his hold on the reader's interest. Perilously near to the inhuman in his consistent egoism, Sir Willoughby Patterne remains immortal through the genius of his creator.

*The Tragic Comedians* (1881), though founded on a "well-known story," is admittedly only "a study," and conveys little to those not already familiar with its subject; while the controversy concerning a historical incident, which is generally supposed to have suggested a dramatic passage in *Diana of the Crossways* (1885), has contributed little or nothing to the popular appreciation of that work. The political atmosphere of this great novel is very skilfully varied from that of *Beauchamp's Career*.

In later years Meredith's novels did not appear so regularly, and a certain tendency to exaggerate, if not to caricature, his peculiar mannerisms, to some extent limited their popularity. Yet *One of Our Conquerors* (1891) has all the vitality of his best work, and reveals the same marvellous insight into the nature of women. *Lord Ormont and his Aminta* (1894) is equally dramatic, and *The Amazing Marriage* (1895) is no less subtle.

The volume containing *The Tale of Chloe*, and other pieces, is Meredith's one exercise in the short story. Its picture of true human hearts beneath the starched brocades of an artificial society stands unrivalled.

Meredith's poetry has not yet become so popular as his novels, and it may be doubtful whether it will ever be generally acceptable even to ardent readers of verse. He uses difficult and original metres, indulges in a kind of metaphorical shorthand, and too frequently buries his philosophy beyond the reach of any but the highly imaginative and the highly cultivated reader. *Modern Love* (1862), for example, has been very variously interpreted by the critics, and it would require considerable temerity to attempt a final analysis or judgment on many others of the poems.

*The Empty Purse* (1892), dedicated "to our later Prodigal Son," the *Peer Gynt* with us, again, is at once mystical and rugged. But in certain memorable nature-poems Meredith "achieves an unwonted simplicity, and with the simplicity a directness of vision and a force of presentation which give to his work a fine invigorating quality of stimulation and refreshment."

The titles of two collections, not yet enumerated, are singularly happy. *Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of the Earth* (1883) suggests that ecstasy of eager, impassioned life most perfectly rendered, for example, in the immortal *Lark Ascending*, while *A Reading of Earth* (1888) expresses with even finer subtlety that absolute identification with the life of the world along the avenues of sense which characterizes his best poetry. As a true singer, unerring in intimate, sensuous, and emotional realization of nature's moods, he stands alone.

Of Meredith's novels it is very difficult to speak, save in the vague and valueless language of eulogy. His *dramatis personæ* crowd into the mind, so living and actual, whether dignified by tragedy, illumined by wit, or transformed by love, that, without devoting a chapter to the discussion of each, one can scarce do more or better than pronounce them absolutely human, delightfully varied, and perfectly consistent. It has been said, indeed, with truth that he alone of men novelists understands the mystery of woman; but we are inclined to declare him equally supreme in the presentation of manly men—at least among contemporaries by whom the truly heroic is apt to be unknown or distrusted.

Meredith, again, revived the lost fashion of storytelling, proper to fiction. His plots are all original and daring, full of natural human interest, reflecting the course of life, and tuned to dramatic developments.

His style, if somewhat baffling while unfamiliar, is eloquent, vigorous, and unmatched in power for con-

veying a thought, describing a scene, or revealing a character. It exhibits a rare combination of wit and humour, now almost rollicking in its abandon to verbal whimsicality, and anon grave, measured, and polished as glass with its undercurrent of overwhelming satire.

Meredith has introduced us to men and women, wholly lovable, purely comic, or almost hateful, who have deepened and illumined our knowledge of human nature. He has immeasurably extended our conception of the experiences which may test and strengthen character. In his novels we see ourselves—we recognize God's world.

### A LETTER FROM THE COUNTESS.

(FROM "EVAN HARRINGTON.")

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Your note awaited me. No sooner my name announced, than servitors in yellow livery, with powder and buckles started before me, and bowing one presented it on a salver. A venerable butler—most impressive! led the way. In future, my dear, let it be *de Saldar de Sancorvo*. That is our title *by rights*, and it may as well be so in England. English *Countess* is certainly best. Always put the *de*. But let us be systematic, as my poor Silva says. He would be in the way here, and had better not come till I see something he can do. Silva has great reliance upon me. The farther he is from Lymport, my dear!—and imagine me, Harriet, driving through Fallowfield to Beckley Court! I gave one peep at Dubbins's, as I passed. The school still goes on. I saw three little girls skipping, and the old swing-pole. SEMINARY FOR YOUNG LADIES as bright as ever! I should have liked to have kissed the children and given them bonbons and a holiday.

How sparing you English are of your crests and arms! I fully expected to see the Jocelyns over my bed; but no—four posts totally without ornament! Sleep, indeed, must be the result of dire fatigue in such a bed. The Jocelyn crest is a hawk in jesses. The Elburne arms are, *Or*, three falcons on a field, *vert*. How heraldry reminds me of poor Papa! the evenings we used to spend with him, when he stayed at home, studying it so diligently under his directions! We never shall again! Sir Franks Jocelyn is the *third* son of Lord Elburne, made a Baronet for his patriotic support of the Ministry in a time of great trouble. The people are *sometimes* grateful, my dear. Lord Elburne is the fourteenth of his line—originally simple country squires. They talk of the Roses, but we need not go so very far back as that. I do not quite understand why a Lord's son should condescend to a Baronetcy. Precedence of some sort for his lady, I suppose. I have yet to learn whether she ranks by his birth, or his present title. If so a young Baronetcy cannot possibly be a *gain*. One thing is *certain*. She cares very



little about it. She is *most eccentric*. But remember what I have told you. It will be serviceable when you are speaking of the *family*.

The dinner-hour, six. It would no doubt be *full seven* in Town. I am convinced you are half-an-hour too early. I had the post of honour to the right of Sir Franks. Evan to the right of Lady Jocelyn. Most fortunately he was in the best of spirits—quite brilliant. I saw the eyes of that sweet Rose glisten. On the other side of me sat my pet diplomatist, and I gave him one or two political secrets which astonished him. Of course, my dear, I was wheedled out of them. His contempt for our weak intellects is ineffable. But a woman *must* now and then ingratiate herself at the expense of her sex. This is perfectly legitimate. Tory policy at the table. The Opposition, as Andrew says, not represented. So to show that we were human beings, we differed among ourselves, and it soon became clear to me that Lady Jocelyn is the *rankest* of Radicals. My secret suspicion is, that she is a person of no birth whatever, wherever her money came from. A fine woman—yes; still to be admired, I suppose, by some kind of men; but totally wanting in the essentially feminine attractions.

There was no party, so to say. I will describe the people present, beginning with the *insignificants*.

First, Mr. Parsley, the curate of Beckley. He eats everything at table, and agrees with everything. A most excellent orthodox young clergyman. Except that he was nearly choked by a fish-bone, and could not quite conceal his distress—and really Rose should have repressed her desire to laugh till the time for our retirement—he made no sensation. I saw her eyes watering, and she is not clever in turning it off. In *that* nobody ever equalled dear Papa. I attribute the attack almost entirely to the tightness of the white neck-cloths the young clergymen of the Established Church wear. But, my dear, I have lived too long away from them to wish for an instant the slightest change in anything they think, say, or do. The mere sight of this young man was most refreshing to my spirit. He may be the shepherd of a flock, this poor Mr. Parsley, but he is a sheep to one young person.

Mr. Drummond Forth. A great favourite of Lady Jocelyn's; an old friend. He went with them to the East. Nothing improper. She is too cold for that. He is fair, with regular features, very self-possessed, and ready—your English notions of gentlemanly. But none of your men treat a woman *as a woman*. We are either angels, or good fellows, or heaven knows what that is bad. No exquisite delicacy, no insinuating softness, mixed with respect, none of that *hovering over the border*, as Papa used to say, none of that happy indefiniteness of manner which seems to declare "I would love you if I might," or "I do, but I dare not tell," even when engaged in the most trivial attentions—handing a footstool, remarking on the soup, etc. You none of you know how to *meet* a woman's smile, or to engage her eyes without boldness—to *slide off them*, as it were, gracefully. Evan alone can look between the eyelids of a woman. I have had to correct him, for to me he quite exposes the state of his heart towards dearest Rose. She listens to Mr. Forth with evident esteem. In Portugal we do not understand young ladies having male friends.

Hamilton Jocelyn—all politics. The stiff Englishman. Not a

shade of manners. He invited me to drink wine. Before I had finished my bow his glass was empty—the man was telling an anecdote of Lord Livelyston! You may be sure, my dear, I did not say I had seen his lordship.

Seymour Jocelyn, Colonel of Hussars. He did nothing but sigh for the cold weather, and hunting. All I envied him was his moustache for Evan. Will you believe that the ridiculous boy has shaved!

Then there is Melville, my dear diplomatist; and here is another instance of our Harrington luck. He has the gout in his right hand; he can only just hold knife and fork, and is interdicted Port-wine and pennmanship. The dinner was not concluded before I had arranged that Evan should resume (gratuitously, you know) his post of secretary to him. So here is Evan fixed at Beckley Court as long as Melville stays. Talking of him, I am horrified suddenly. They call him *the great Mel*!

Sir Franks is most estimable, I am sure, as a man, and redolent of excellent qualities—a beautiful disposition, very handsome. He has just as much and no more of the English polish one ordinarily meets. When he has given me soup or fish, bowed to me over wine, and asked a conventional question, he has done with me. I should imagine his opinions to be extremely good, for they are not a multitude.

Then his lady—but I have not grappled with her yet. Now for the women, for I quite class her with the opposite sex.

You must know that, before I retired for the night, I induced Conning to think she had a bad head-ache, and Rose lent me her lady's maid—they call the creature Polly. A terrible talker. She would tell all about the family. Rose has been speaking of Evan. It would have looked better had she been quiet—but then she is so English!

## SIR WILLOUGHBY REFUSED.

(FROM "THE EGOIST.")

"Behold! Come to the light, look in the glass."

"I may redden," said Lætitia. "I suppose that is due to the action of the heart. I am changed. Heart, for any other purpose, I have not. I am like you, Sir Willoughby, in this: I could not marry without loving, and I do not know what love is, except that it is an empty dream."

"Marriage, my dearest . . ."

"You are mistaken."

"I will cure you, my Lætitia. Look to me, I am the tonic. It is not common confidence, but conviction. I, my love, I!"

"There is no cure for what I feel, Sir Willoughby."

"Spare me the formal Prefix, I beg. You place your hand in mine, relying on me. I am pledged for the remainder. We end as we began: my request is for your hand—your hand in marriage."

"I cannot give it."

"To be my wife!"

"It is an honour: I must decline it."

"Are you quite well, Lætitia? I propose in the plainest terms I can employ, to make you Lady Patterne—mine."

"I am compelled to refuse."

"Why? Refuse? Your reason!"

"The reason has been named."

He took a stride to inspirit his wits.

"There's a madness comes over women at times, I know. Answer me, Lætitia:—by all the evidence a man can have, I could swear it:—but answer me: you loved me once?"

"I was an exceedingly foolish, romantic girl."

"You evade my question: I am serious. Oh!" he walked away from her, booming a sound of utter repudiation of her present imbecility, and hurrying to her side, said: "But it was manifest to the whole world! It was a legend. To love like Lætitia Dale, was a current phrase. You were an example, a light to women: no one was your match for devotion. You were a precious cameo, still gazing! And I was the object. You loved me. You loved me, you belonged to me, you were mine, my possession, my jewel; I was prouder of your constancy than of anything else that I had on earth. It was a part of the order of the universe to me. A doubt of it would have disturbed my creed. Why, good heaven! where are we? Is nothing solid on earth? You loved me!"

"I was childish indeed."

"You loved me passionately!"

"Do you insist on shaming me through and through, Sir Willoughby? I have been exposed enough."

"You cannot blot out the past: it is written, it is recorded. You loved me devotedly, silence is no escape. You loved me."

"I did."

"You never loved me, you shallow woman! 'I did!' As if there could be a cessation of a love! What are we to reckon on as ours? We prize a woman's love; we guard it jealously, we trust to it, dream of it; *there* is our wealth; *there* is our talisman! And when we open the casket, it has flown!—barren vacuity!—we are poorer than dogs. As well think of keeping a costly wine in potter's clay as love in the heart of a woman! There are women—women! Oh! they are all of a stamp—coin! Coin for any hand! It's a fiction, an imposture—they cannot love! They are the shadows of men. Compared with men, they have as much heart in them as the shadow beside the body! Lætitia!"

"Sir Willoughby."

"You refuse my offer?"

"I must."

"You refuse to take me for your husband?"

"I cannot be your wife."

"You have changed? . . . You have set your heart? . . . you could marry? . . . there is a man? . . . you could marry one! I will have an answer, I am sick of evasions. What was in the mind of heaven when women were created, will be the riddle to the end of the world! Every good man in turn has made the inquiry. I have a right to know who robs me—we may try as we like to solve it. —Satan is painted laughing!—I say I have a right to know who robs me. Answer me."

"I shall not marry."

"That is not an answer."

"I love no one."

"You loved me.—You are silent?—but you confessed it. Then

you confess it was a love that could die! Are you unable to perceive how that redounds to my discredit? You loved me, you have ceased to love me. In other words, you charge me with incapacity to sustain a woman's love. You accuse me of inspiring a miserable passion that cannot last a lifetime! You let the world see that I am a man to be aimed at for a temporary mark! And simply because I happen to be in your neighbourhood at an age when a young woman is impressionable! You make a public example of me as a man for whom women may have a caprice, but that is all; he cannot enchain them; he fascinates passingly; they fall off. Is it just, for me to be taken up and cast down at your will? Reflect on that scandal! Shadows? Why, a man's shadow is faithful to him at least. What are women? There is not a comparison in nature that does not tower above them! not one that does not hoot at them! I, throughout my life guided by absolute deference to their weakness—paying them politeness, courtesy—whatever I touch I am happy in, except when I touch women! How is it? What is the mystery? Some monstrous explanation must exist. What can it be? I am favoured by fortune from my birth until I enter into relations with women! But will you be so good as to account for it in your defence of them? Oh! were the relations dishonourable, it would be quite another matter. *Then they . . .* I could recount . . . I disdain to chronicle such victories. Quite another matter! But they are flies, and I am something more stable. They are flies. I look beyond the day; I owe a duty to my line. They are flies. I foresee it. I shall be crossed in my fate so long as I fail to shun them—flies! Not merely born for the day, I maintain that they are spiritually ephemeral.—Well, my opinion of your sex is directly traceable to you. You may alter it, or fling another of us men out on the world with the old bitter experience. Consider this, that it is on your head if my ideal of women is wrecked. It rests with you to restore it. I love you. I discover that you are the one woman I have always loved. I come to you, I sue you, and suddenly—you have changed! ‘I have changed: I am not the same.’ What can it mean? ‘I cannot marry: I love no one.’ And you say you do not know what love is—avowing in the same breath that you did love me! Am I the empty dream? My hand, heart, fortune, name, are yours, at your feet: you kick them hence. I am here—you reject me. But why, for what mortal reason am I here other than my faith in your love? You drew me to you, to repel me, and have a wretched revenge.”

“You know it is not that, Sir Willoughby.”

“Have you any possible suspicion that I am still entangled, not, as I assure you I am, perfectly free in fact and in honour?”

“It is not that.”

“Name it; for you see your power. Would you have me kneel to you, madam?”

“Oh! no; it would complete my grief.”

“You feel grief? Then you believe in my affection, and you hurl it away. I have no doubt that as a poetess, you would say, love is eternal. And you have loved me. And you tell me you love me no more. You are not very logical, Lætitia Dale.”

“Poetesses rarely are: if I am one, which I little pretend to be for writing silly verses. I have passed out of that delusion, with the rest.”

"You shall not wrong those dear old days, Lætitia. I see them now : when I rode by your cottage and you were at your window, pen in hand, your hair straying over your forehead. Romantic, yes ; not foolish. Why were you foolish in thinking of me ? Some day I will commission an artist to paint me that portrait of you from my description. And I remember when we first whispered . . . I remember your trembling. You have forgotten—I remember. I remember our meeting in the park on the path to church. I remember the heavenly morning of my return from my travels, and the same Lætitia meeting me, steadfast and unchangeable. Could I ever forget ? Those are ineradicable scenes ; pictures of my youth, interwound with me. I may say, that as I recede from them, I dwell on them the more. Tell me, Lætitia, was there not a certain prophecy of your father's concerning us two ? I fancy I heard of one. There was one."

"He was an invalid. Elderly people nurse illusions."

"Ask yourself, Lætitia, who is the obstacle to the fulfilment of his prediction ?—truth, if ever a truth was foreseen on earth ! You have not changed so far that you would feel *no* pleasure in gratifying him ? I go to him to-morrow morning with the first light."

"You will compel me to follow, and undeceive him."

"Do so, and I denounce an unworthy affection you are ashamed to avow."

"That would be idle, though it would be base."

"Proof of love, then ! For no one but you should it be done, and no one but you dare accuse me of a baseness."

"Sir Willoughby, you will let my father die in peace."

"He and I together will contrive to persuade you."

"You tempt me to imagine that you want a wife at any cost."

"You, Lætitia, you."

"I am tired," she said. "It is late, I would rather not hear more. I am sorry if I have caused you pain. I suppose you have spoken with candour. I defend neither my sex nor myself. I can only say, I am a woman as good as dead : happy to be made happy in my way, but so little alive that I cannot realize any other way. As for love, I am thankful to have broken a spell. You have a younger woman in your mind ; I am an old one : I have no ambition and no warmth. My utmost prayer is to float on the stream—a purely physical desire of life : I have no strength to swim. Such a woman is not the wife for you, Sir Willoughby. Good night."

## CHAPTER X.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

Born 1837 A.D. . . . . Died 1909 A.D.

ALONE in a generation remarkable alike for its facility in competent verse and its lack of poetical inspiration, Swinburne long remained the great singer of England.

Born in London on April 5, 1857, he was educated at Eton and Oxford, but never contemplated any other occupation for himself than the writing of verse.

He published his first volume, *The Queen Mother and Rosamund*, at the age of twenty-four, and for the remainder of his life produced great poetry copiously and regularly.

*The Queen Mother*, indeed, was a remarkable achievement. A little cramped, stiff, and archaic, it yet revealed undoubted dramatic power, and a rare mastery of blank verse. The structure is more Shakespearean than in any of his later work. However, it was *Atalanta in Calydon*, published in 1865, which made him famous. He was compared with Shelley, contrasted with Keats, proclaimed "a scholar and a poet." His blank verse exhibited a rare combination of classical dignity with romantic exuberance in sound and colour. His lyrics were swifter and more musical than anything hitherto written in the language; the dramatic form was Greek, and yet rather Asiatic in its desperate fatalism.

In the same year Swinburne issued *Chastelard*, the first part of his great trilogy on Queen Mary, completed by *Bothwell* in 1874 and *Mary Stuart* in 1881. Written before *Atalanta*, the verse structure approaches more nearly to that of *The Queen Mother*; but the modern note of complex, morbid, and restless passion, at once languorous and cruel, temporarily offended many who had been captivated by his earliest work. The last scene between Mary and Darnley, in *Bothwell*, will probably be accepted as Swinburne's finest achievement in pure drama.

This first-fruit of a subject destined for so many years to haunt the poet's imagination was quickly followed by *Poems and Ballads* (1866).

Here, indeed, spoke the voice of the flesh. The work, of course, was severely handled; it contained certain obvious faults of taste. It was frankly rebellious, intemperate in thought and language. But the underlying originality, born of true genius; the burn-



ing reality of passion ; above all, the consummate lyrical fluency and the haunting melody of phrase, overpower the judgment. Here, indeed, was a veritable king of men—a singer eternity could not silence.

But Swinburne never dwelt long upon any one mood, or harped upon one string. Having “raised a storm and formed a school,” he now poured the mighty torrent of his tempestuous soul into the ideals evoked by the name of Mazzini. Foreshadowed by *A Song of Italy* (1867), his *Songs before Sunrise* (1871) contains the most lofty and the most passionately lyrical songs of liberty ever penned. Here our poet is at one time far more restrained, more lucid, and more virile than his wont ; as at another he excels himself in the ferocity of his language.

This political and religious frenzy was followed by a return to his trilogy, *Bothwell*, the longest play in existence, appearing in 1874, and by *Erechtheus* (1876), “more intimately Greek than any attempt ever made to reproduce the effect of a classical drama in English.” Then in 1875 came *Songs of Two Nations* ; in 1878, a second volume of *Poems and Ballads*, “looking before and after ;” in 1880, *Songs of the Springtides*. Swinburne now indulged in yet more varied lyrical forms, and at the same time showed a tendency to certain limitations in subject. Of late years he had been recognized as the laureate of the sea and of the nursery. On the other hand, he had written ballads in lines of twenty syllables, and published a whole volume—*A Century of Roundels* (1883)—of dainty lyrics in a form of his own invention. His mastery over technique seemed to increase with each year, and he was for ever accomplishing some new feat in the intricacies of rhythm with unfailing success.

*Tristram of Lyonesse*, a poem of nine cantos, with a prelude, appeared in 1882 ; *A Midsummer Holiday, and Other Poems*, in 1884 ; *Marino Faliero*, recalling and surpassing Byron, in 1885 ; *Locrine*, of the Elizabethan fashion, in 1887.

Among Swinburne's more recent volumes may be mentioned a third series of *Poems and Ballads*, which was published in 1889, full of the old vitality of passion; *Astrophel, and Other Poems* (1894), mainly devoted to an expression of generous enthusiasm for heroism and genius; *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards* (1899); and *Love's Cross Currents*, a novel (1905).

Unquestionably the poet's cunning did not forsake him. The charm of exquisite word-melody is never absent. Every line is vital, now burning with the sensuous love of beauty, now fierce with the scorn of conventionality, now mystic and restless with the swirl of ever-moving waters, now tender with the babbling music of child-laughter. The rhythm echoes the mood; the rhyme is haunting, exquisite to the ear.

But it must be confessed that the constant sweetness of linked syllables is at times cloying, and the hurried rush of rhymes conduces dizziness. We weary for some thought on which the mind may rest awhile; we wish that the poet were a little less fluent. "Swinburne sings so naturally that he has sometimes given us only the notes of music. He must sing at all costs."

Despite the essentially poetical quality of all his work, Swinburne is almost equally distinguished as a writer of prose criticism or appreciation. Here, too, he is somewhat spendthrift of words. His delight in "the noble pleasure of praising" has, perhaps, obscured the fundamental sanity and clearness of his enthusiasm; but no one would deny for a moment the commanding excellence of his many studies of men and books. Whether interpreting *William Blake*, in the volume he issued as early as 1868; extolling *Charlotte Brontë*, as in 1877; writing of *George Chapman*, as in 1875; of *Shakespeare*, as in 1880; or of his favourite *Victor Hugo*, as in 1886, he is always eloquent and suggestive.

Naturally he has prejudices: inevitably his praise may be called intemperate; but he never waxes enthusiastic over bad work—he always gives good reason

for applause. In style his prose is vigorous, admirably balanced and modulated, if a trifle over-decorated, and always matching his thought. His defects are hardly "so much his own fault as the fault of Nature, who created him in a fit of extravagance."

## AT PARTING.

For a day and night Love sang to us, played with us,  
 Folded us round from the dark and the light ;  
 And our hearts were fulfilled of the music he made with us,  
 Made with our hearts and our lips while he stayed with us,  
 Stayed in mid passage his pinions from flight  
 For a day and a night.

From his foes that kept watch with his wings had he hidden us,  
 Covered us close from the eyes that would smite,  
 From the feet that had tracked and the tongues that had chidden us,  
 Sheltering in shade of the myrtles forbidden us,  
 Spirit and flesh growing one with delight  
 For a day and a night.

But his wings will not rest and his feet will not stay for us :  
 Morning is here in the joy of its might ;  
 With his breath has he sweetened a night and a day for us ;  
 Now let him pass, and the myrtles make way for us ;  
 Love can but last in us here at his height  
 For a day and a night.

## HERSE.

When grace is given us ever to behold  
 A child some sweet months old,  
 Love, laying across our lips his finger, saith,  
 Smiling, with bated breath,  
 Hush ! for the holiest thing that lives is here,  
 And heaven's own heart how near !  
 How dare we, that may gaze not on the sun,  
 Gaze on this verier one ?  
 Heart, hold thy peace ; eyes, be cast down for shame ;  
 Lips, breathe not yet its name.  
 In heaven they know what name to call it ; we,  
 How should we know ? For, see !  
 The adorable sweet living marvellous  
 Strange light that lightens us  
 Who gaze, desertless of such glorious grace,  
 Full in a babe's warm face !  
 All roses that the morning rears are nought,  
 All stars not worth a thought.  
 Set this one star against them, or suppose  
 As rival this one rose.  
 What price could pay with earth's whole weight of gold  
 One least flushed roseleaf's fold

Of all this dimpling store of smiles that shine  
 From each warm curve and line,  
 Each charm of flower-sweet flesh, to reillumine  
 The dappled rose-red bloom  
 Of all its dainty body, honey-sweet  
 Clenched hands and curled up feet,  
 That on the roses of the dawn have trod  
 As they came down from God,  
 And keep the flush and colour that the sky  
 Takes when the sun comes nigh,  
 And keep the likeness of the smile their grace  
 Evoked on God's own face  
 When, seeing this work of his most heavenly mood,  
 He saw that it was good ?  
 For all its warm sweet body seems one smile,  
 And mere men's love too vile  
 To meet it, or with eyes that worship dims  
 Read o'er the little limbs,  
 Read all the book of all their beauties o'er,  
 Rejoice, revere, adore,  
 Bow down and worship each delight in turn,  
 Laugh, wonder, yield, and yearn.  
 But when our trembling kisses dare, yet dread,  
 Even to draw nigh its head,  
 And touch, and scarce with touch or breath surprise  
 Its mild miraculous eyes  
 Out of their viewless vision—O, what then,  
 What may be said of men ?  
 What speech may name a new-born child ? What word  
 Earth ever spake or heard ?  
 The best men's tongue that ever glory knew  
 Called that a drop of dew  
 Which from the breathing creature's kindly womb  
 Came forth in blameless bloom.  
 We have no word, as had those men most high,  
 To call a baby by.  
 Rose, ruby, lily, pearl of stormless seas—  
 A better word than these,  
 A better sign it was than flower or gem  
 That love revealed to them :  
 They knew that whence comes light or quickening flame  
 Thence only this thing came,  
 And only might be likened of our love  
 To somewhat born above,  
 Not even to sweetest things dropped else on earth,  
 Only to dew's own birth.  
 Nor doubt we but their sense was heavenly true,  
 Babe, when we gaze on you,  
 A dew-drop out of heaven whose colours are  
 More bright than sun or star,  
 As now, ere watching love dare fear or hope,  
 Lips, hands, and eyelids ope,  
 And all your life is mixed with earthly leaven.  
 O child, what news from heaven ?

## CHAPTER XI.

THOMAS HARDY.

Born 1840 A.D.

ADMITTEDLY second to George Meredith, and as certainly greater than any living novelist, no writer could differ more essentially from his great contemporary than Mr. Thomas Hardy. Though a much younger man, and though his first important novel was also published in his thirty-second year, Mr. Hardy came into his own while the other was still "*caviare* to the general," and for many years has held undisputed sway over the realms of fiction. In all probability, he is to-day more widely read and more generally appreciated; yet no one would hesitate about the relative genius of the two men.

Mr. Hardy was born in 1840, and though he wrote a good deal of verse in his youth, made no attempt towards the serious pursuit of letters until he had devoted nearly ten years to the study of architecture. In 1863 he won the prize and medal of the Institute of British Architects for an essay on "Coloured Brick and Terra-Cotta Architecture."

Mr. Hardy's first novel, *Desperate Remedies* (1871), attracted little attention; but both *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), and *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), revealed their author's power, and were received with applause sufficient to determine his final choice of a profession. *Far from the Madding Crowd* came out in 1874, and established his reputation.

Mr. Hardy's manner has always been that of the conventional novelist. He attempted nothing new in plot, character, or style, excelling only by sureness of touch, wit in dialogue, emotional intensity in the analysis of character, and eloquence in description. It would consequently be impossible to indicate in a phrase any distinguishing characteristics of the novels



GEORGE MEREDITH.

*From the portrait by G. F. Watts.*

*(Photo by Hollyer.)*





which followed his first success—*The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876), *The Return of the Native* (1878), *A Laodicean* (1881), *Two on a Tower* (1882), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *The Woodlanders* (1887).

Certain qualities, however, are to be found in the whole group which have given a certain unity to his work, and enable us to amplify our simple statement of his superiority over the ordinary practitioners of novel-writing. In the first place, Mr. Hardy will always be associated with a certain country district, peculiarly English, and, through his matchless descriptions, familiar to many who have never visited its confines. The neighbourhood of Wessex, not corresponding precisely with any geographical division known to our ordnance surveyors, is yet no figment of its creator's brain. So surely, indeed, are the features of local interest implanted on his imagination that actual maps thereof have been issued in recent editions of the novels; while, on the other hand, the testimony of observant travellers is unanimous concerning the truthfulness of their verisimilitude to actual landscapes. This, however, does not conclude the matter. Mr. Hardy's sympathy with nature is not merely that of the clever painter. He understands her moods, and has reproduced with marvellous effect the atmosphere of storm and sunshine, the solitude of ploughed fields and the business of farm-life, in their strange sympathy with and influence on human joys and sorrows.

Somewhat akin to this understanding of nature is Mr. Hardy's use of rustic dialect. In this matter he has the fidelity of a phonograph, observation and memory being never at fault, the irregularities in spelling producing exactly the desired effect without obscuring the sense. Nor is this all. The peasants in his novels are given to a kind of wit which has, again and again, been compared to that of the gravediggers and the gardeners in Shakespeare. Undoubtedly, he has thus expressed many subtle philosophical reflections and

quaint comments on life. Neither the actual language nor the thoughts are, of course, appropriate to the yokel mind, but the fact need not diminish their artistic effect.

Mr. Hardy builds up his leading characters almost exclusively on emotion. They develop amidst the stock materials of fiction—love, jealousy, and ambition—with little or no assistance from historical or political colouring, religious or philosophical speculation.

In addition to these regular novels, Mr. Hardy published three volumes of short stories—*Wessex Tales* (1888), *A Group of Noble Dames* (1891), and *Life's Little Ironies* (1894). In this kind of work he is indeed a past master. Seldom, if ever, have such dramatic effects—often enlivened by the happiest touches of humour—been produced in such a small compass. The methods of a monotone are admirably suited to his genius for concentrated intensity, and he has the power of delineating character in a few pages. In these little volumes will be found much of his finest work.

Of recent years Mr. Hardy has attained to an unfortunate notoriety, foolishly exaggerated by noisy criticism, through his treatment of certain topics, usually avoided by modern writers, in a manner which we associate with the French realists. Neither *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), *Jude the Obscure* (1895), nor *The Well-Beloved* (1897), can be discussed here; nor do we propose to dogmatize upon the general questions of taste and morals which have been raised by their publication. To us they certainly do not represent Mr. Hardy at his best, and we cannot feel that the unusual frankness here indulged adds either subtlety or power to his work.

As we have already seen, Mr. Hardy wrote poetry in his youth, and has never entirely neglected that form of work. The verses collected in *Wessex Poems* (1898), and in *Poems of the Past and Present* (1901), are

many of them very beautiful. His style is simple but vigorous, his thoughts are clear and poetical. He is now engaged upon *The Dynasts*, a Napoleonic drama, in many parts, which is ambitiously conceived, and cannot yet be fully estimated with justice.

TONY KYTES, THE ARCH-DECEIVER.

(FROM "LIFE'S LITTLE IRONIES.")

The returned villager waited silently, and the carrier went on :—

"I shall never forget Tony's face. 'Twas a little, round, firm, tight face, with a seam here and there left by the smallpox, but not enough to hurt his looks in a woman's eye, though he'd had it badish when he was a boy. 'So very serious looking and unsmiling 'a was, that young man, that it really seemed as if he couldn't laugh at all without great pain to his conscience. He looked very hard at a small speck in your eye when talking to 'ee. And there was no more sign of a whisker or beard on Tony Kyte's face than on the palm of my hand. He used to sing 'The Tailor's Breeches' with a religious manner, as if it were a hymn :—

"O the petticoats went off, and the breeches they went on !"

and all the rest of the scandalous stuff. He was quite the women's favourite, and in return for their likings he loved 'em in shoals.

"But in course of time Tony got fixed down to one in particular, Milly Richards, a nice, light, small, tender little thing ; and it was soon said that they were engaged to be married. One Saturday he had been to market to do business for his father, and was driving home the waggon in the afternoon. When he reached the foot of the very hill we shall be going over in ten minutes who should he see waiting for him at the top but Unity Sallet, a handsome girl, one of the young women he'd been very tender toward before he'd got engaged to Milly.

"As soon as Tony came up to her she said, 'My dear Tony, will you give me a lift home ?'

"That I will, darling,' said Tony. 'You don't suppose I could refuse 'ee ?'

"She smiled a smile, and up she hopped, and on drove Tony.

"'Tony,' she says, in a sort of tender chide, 'why did ye desert me for that other one ? In what is she better than I ? I should have made 'ee a finer wife, and a more loving one too. 'Tisn't girls that are so easily won at first that are the best. Think how long we've known each other—ever since we were children almost—now haven't we, Tony ?'

"Yes, that we have,' says Tony, a-struck with the truth o't.

"And you've never seen anything in me to complain of, have ye, Tony ? Now tell the truth to me ?'

"I never have, upon my life,' says Tony.

"And—can you say I'm not pretty, Tony ? Now look at me !'

"He let his eyes light upon her for a long while. 'I really can't,' says he. 'In fact, I never knowed you was so pretty before !'

“ ‘Prettier than she?’ ”

“ What Tony would have said to that nobody knows, for before he could speak, what should he see ahead, over the hedge past the turning, but a feather he knew well—the feather in Milly’s hat—she to whom he had been thinking of putting the question as to giving out the banns that very week.

“ ‘Unity,’ says he, as mild as he could, ‘here’s Milly coming. Now I shall catch it mightily if she sees ’ee riding here with me; and if you get down she’ll be turning the corner in a moment, and, seeing ’ee in the road, she’ll know we’ve been coming on together. Now, dearest Unity, will ye, to avoid all unpleasantness, which I know ye can’t bear any more than I, will ye lie down in the back part of the waggon, and let me cover you over with the tarpaulin till Milly has passed? It will all be done in a minute. Do!—and I’ll think over what we’ve said; and perhaps I shall put a loving question to you after all, instead of to Milly. ’Tisn’t true that it is all settled between her and me.’ ”

“ Well, Unity Sallet agreed, and lay down at the back end of the waggon, and Tony covered her over, so that the waggon seemed to be empty but for the loose tarpaulin; and then he drove on to meet Milly.

“ ‘My dear Tony!’ cries Milly, looking up with a little pout at him as he came near. “ ‘How long you’ve been coming home! Just as if I didn’t live at Upper Longpuddle at all! And I’ve come to meet you as you asked me to do, and to ride back with you, and talk over our future home—since you asked me, and I promised. But I shouldn’t have come else, Mr. Tony!’ ”

“ ‘Ah, my dear, I did ask ye—to be sure I did, now I think of it—but I had quite forgot it. To ride back with me, did you say, dear Milly?’ ”

“ ‘Well, of course! What can I do else? Surely you don’t want me to walk, now I’ve come all this way?’ ”

“ ‘O no, no! I was thinking you might be going on to town to meet your mother. I saw her there—and she looked as if she might be expecting ’ee.’ ”

“ ‘O no; she’s just home. She came across the fields, and so got back before you.’ ”

“ ‘Ah! I didn’t know that,’ says Tony. And there was no help for it but to take her up beside him.

“ They talked on very pleasantly, and looked at the trees, and beasts, and birds, and insects, and at the ploughmen at work in the fields, till presently who should they see looking out of the upper window of a house that stood beside the road they were following, but Hannah Jolliver, another young beauty of the place at that time, and the very first woman that Tony had fallen in love with—before Milly and before Unity, in fact—the one that he had almost arranged to marry instead of Milly. She was a much more dashing girl than Milly Richards, though he’d not thought much of her of late. The house Hannah was looking from was her aunt’s.

“ ‘My dear Milly—my coming wife, as I may call ’ee,’ says Tony in his modest way, and not so loud that Unity could overhear, ‘I see a young woman alooking out of window, who I think may accost me. The fact is, Milly, she had a notion that I was wishing to marry her, and since she’s discovered I’ve promised another, and a

prettier than she, I'm rather afeard of her temper if she sees us together. Now, Milly, would you do me a favour—my coming wife, as I may say ?

“ ‘Certainly, dearest Tony,’ says she.

“ ‘Then would ye creep under the empty sacks just here in the front of the waggon, and hide there out of sight till we’ve passed the house ? She hasn’t seen us yet. You see, we ought to live in peace and good-will since ’tis almost Christmas, and ’twill prevent angry passions rising, which we always should do.’

“ ‘I don’t mind, to oblige you, Tony,’ Milly said; and though she didn’t care much about doing it, she crept under, and crouched down just behind the seat, Unity being snug at the other end. So they drove on till they got near the road-side cottage. Hannah had soon seen him coming, and waited at the window, looking down upon him. She tossed her head a little disdainful and smiled off-hand.

“ ‘Well, aren’t you going to be civil enough to ask me to ride home with you !’ she says, seeing that he was for driving past with a nod and a smile.

“ ‘Ah, to be sure ! What was I thinking of ?’ said Tony, in a flutter. ‘But you seem as if you was staying at your aunt’s ?’

“ ‘No, I am not,’ she said. ‘Don’t you see I have my bonnet and jacket on ? I have only called to see her on my way home. How can you be so stupid, Tony ?’

“ ‘In that case—ah—of course you must come along wi’ me,’ says Tony, feeling a dim sort of sweat rising up inside his clothes. And he reined in the horse, and waited till she’d come downstairs, and then helped her up beside him. He drove on again, his face as long as a face that was a round one by nature well could be.

“ ‘Hannah looked round sideways into his eyes. ‘This is nice, isn’t it, Tony ?’ she says. ‘I like riding with you.’

“ ‘Tony looked back into her eyes. ‘And I with you,’ he said after a while. In short, having considered her, he warmed up, and the more he looked at her the more he liked her, till he couldn’t for the life of him think why he had ever said a word about marriage to Milly or Unity while Hannah Jolliver was in question. So they sat a little closer and closer, their feet upon the foot-board and their shoulders touching, and Tony thought over and over again how handsome Hannah was. He spoke tenderer and tenderer, and called her ‘dear Hannah’ in a whisper at last.”

## BONFIRE MAKERS.

(FROM “THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE.”)

Had a looker-on been posted in the immediate vicinity of the barrow, he would have learned that these persons were boys and men of the neighbouring hamlets. Each, as he ascended the barrow, had been heavily laden with furze-faggots, carried upon the shoulder by means of a long stake sharpened at each end for impaling them easily—two in front and two behind. They came from a part of the heath a quarter of a mile to the rear, where furze almost exclusively prevailed as a product.

Every individual was so involved in furze by his method of



carrying the faggots that he appeared like a bush on legs till he had thrown them down. The party had marched in trail, like a travelling flock of sheep; that is to say, the strongest first, the weak and young behind.

The loads were all laid together, and a pyramid of furze thirty feet in circumference now occupied the crown of the tumulus, which was known as Rainbarrow for many miles round. Some made themselves busy with matches, and in selecting the driest tufts of furze, others in loosening the bramble bonds which held the faggots together. Others, again, while this was in progress, lifted their eyes and swept the vast expanse of country commanded by their position, now lying nearly obliterated by shade. In the valleys of the heath nothing save its own wild face was visible at any time of day; but this spot commanded a horizon enclosing a tract of far extent, and in many cases lying beyond the heath country. None of its features could be seen now, but the whole made itself felt as a vague stretch of remoteness.

While the men and lads were building the pile, a change took place in the mass of shade which denoted the distant landscape. Red suns and tufts of fire one by one began to arise, flecking the whole country round. They were the bonfires of other parishes and hamlets that were engaged in the same sort of commemoration. Some were distant, and stood in a dense atmosphere, so that bundles of pale strawlike beams radiated around them in the shape of a fan. Some were large and near, glowing scarlet-red from the shade, like wounds in a black hide. Some were Mænades, with winy faces and blown hair. These tintured the silent bosom of the clouds above them and lit up their ephemeral caves, which seemed thenceforth to become scalding caldrons. Perhaps as many as thirty bonfires could be counted within the whole bounds of the district; and as the hour may be told on a clockface when the figures themselves are invisible, so did the men recognize the locality of each fire by its angle and direction, though nothing of the scenery could be viewed.

The first tall flame from Rainbarrow sprang into the sky, attracting all eyes that had been fixed on the distant conflagrations back to their own attempt in the same kind. The cheerful blaze streaked the inner surface of the human circle—now increased by other stragglers, male and female—with its own gold livery, and even overlaid the dark turf around with a lively luminousness, which softened off into obscurity where the barrow rounded downwards out of sight. It showed the barrow to be the segment of a globe, as perfect as on the day when it was thrown up, even the little ditch remaining from which the earth was dug. Not a plough had ever disturbed a grain of that stubborn soil. In the heath's barrenness to the farmer lay its fertility to the historian. There had been no obliteration, because there had been no tending.

It was as if the bonfire-makers were standing in some radiant upper story of the world, detached from and independent of the dark stretches below. The heath down there was now a vast abyss, and no longer a continuation of what they stood on; for their eyes, adapted to the blaze, could see nothing of the deeps beyond its influence. Occasionally, it is true, a more vigorous flare than usual from their faggots sent darting lights like aides-de-camp down the inclines to some distant bush, pool, or patch of white sand, kindling

these to replies of the same colour, till all was lost in darkness again. Then the whole black phenomenon beneath represented Limbo as viewed from the brink by the sublime Florentine in his vision, and the muttered articulations of the wind in the hollows were as complaints and petitions from the "souls of mighty worth" suspended therein.

It was as if these men and boys had suddenly dived into past ages, and fetched therefrom an hour and deed which had before been familiar with this spot. The ashes of the original British pyre which blazed from that summit lay fresh and undisturbed in the barrow beneath their tread. The flames from funeral piles long ago kindled there had shone down upon the lowlands as these were shining now. Festival fires to Thor and Woden had followed on the same ground and duly had their day. Indeed, it is pretty well known that such blazes as this the heathmen were now enjoying are rather the lineal descendants from jumbled Druidical rites and Saxon ceremonies than the invention of popular feeling about Gunpowder Plot.

Moreover, to light a fire is the instinctive and resistant act of man when, at the winter ingress, the curfew is sounded throughout Nature. It indicates a spontaneous, Promethean rebelliousness against the fiat that this recurrent season shall bring foul times, cold darkness, misery, and death. Black chaos comes, and the fettered gods of the earth say, Let there be light.

The brilliant lights and sooty shades which struggled upon the skin and clothes of the persons standing round caused their lineaments and general contours to be drawn with Dureresque vigour and dash. Yet the permanent moral expression of each face it was impossible to discover, for as the nimble flames towered, nodded, and swooped through the surrounding air, the blots of shade and flakes of light upon the countenances of the group changed shape and position endlessly. All was unstable; quivering as leaves, evanescent as lightning. Shadowy eye-sockets, deep as those of a death's head, suddenly turned into pits of lustre: a lantern-jaw was cavernous, then it was shining; wrinkles were emphasized to ravines, or obliterated entirely by a changed ray. Nostrils were dark wells; sinews in old necks were gilt mouldings; things with no particular polish on them were glazed; bright objects, such as the tip of a furze-hook one of the men carried, were as glass; eyeballs glowed like little lanterns. Those whom Nature had depicted as merely quaint became grotesque, the grotesque became preternatural; for all was in extremity.

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## CHAPTER XII.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

Born 1865.

UNQUESTIONABLY no modern writer has occupied public attention of late years so persistently as Mr. Rudyard

Kipling, though we can scarcely at present determine his final position in literature. Any day he may write a greater book.

Born in Bombay on 30th December 1865, Mr. Kipling was apparently engaged as a professional writer from boyhood, and the remarkable powers of observation which characterize his work were developed early—in part an inheritance from his artist father. It was, in fact, as a working journalist that he received his apprenticeship in letters, and his earliest “inventions” appeared in Indian local papers. His first books were published locally, but soon received a London imprint.

Mr. Kipling came to England in 1889, aged twenty-four, already popular, and though he has since 1889 travelled much and entered at times, with varying discretion but uniform vigour, into questions of imperial policy, his career has been that of a famous English novelist and poet, whose life may best be told by a record of his books.

We shall not probably all agree as to whether Mr. Kipling should be finally judged by his verses or his tales. It is not even quite clear on which he himself would lay most stress. He first issued the *Departmental Ditties* in 1886, very humorous and very satirical pictures of Anglo-Indian life; but these were followed immediately by *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888), and during the following year came *Soldiers Three*, *The Story of Gadsbys*, *In Black and White*, *The Phantom Rickshaw*, and *Wee Willie Winkie*—all collections of short stories on similar topics.

Our author's position was now established as a sort of Indian interpreter. Recognizing his youth, we supposed that his pictures were somewhat overdrawn, his cynicism a little exaggerated; but for the great majority of the uncritical English public, India meant charming and “naughty” people like Mrs. Hawksbee; the Indian army spelt Learoyd, Ortheris, and, above all, Mulvaney. And we knew of some fascinating

English children across the waters. Naturally Mr. Kipling was ready with more. *Under the Deodars*, tales of "men and women playing tennis with the Seventh Commandment," and the "not exactly real ghost stories" in *The Phantom 'Rickshaw*, cut deeper; and men said that Mr. Kipling had gone too far.

Then he tried a long novel, and did not quite succeed. *The Light that Failed* (1891), provided with a happy ending for the magazines and published as written in 1891, has great power and subtlety. It was "adapted," with much applause, for the stage, and drew crowded houses. But it is not quite what we expect, or what we want, from Mr. Kipling.

In the following year came *Barrack-room Ballads*, wider and stronger than *Departmental Ditties*, but similar both in manner and subject. Here appeared *Mandalay*, and the marvellous *Ballad of East and West*.

Since this striking volume, have appeared: of tales, *Many Inventions* (1893), *Captains Courageous* (1897), *The Day's Work* (1899), *From Sea to Sea*, a diary of Eastern visits (reprinted 1900), and *Traffics and Discoveries* (1904); of verse, *The Seven Seas* (1896), and *The Five Nations*, containing *The Explorer* (1903).

Nor is this all, for Mr. Kipling has meanwhile published one more long story, perhaps the greatest of his many volumes, and acquired a reputation for nursery literature which has not been approached since the appearance of *Alice in Wonderland*. The two *Jungle Books* (1894 and 1895) are veritable treasure-houses of marvel and adventure. Mowgli, the man-cub, foreshadowed in *Many Inventions*, is dearly beloved by every right-thinking child in the British Empire; the heroic Rikki-tikki-tavi conquered many young hearts by his glorious victories; and who can forget the White Seal, Toomai of the elephants, or the glorious sleigh-ride of fourteen-year-old Kotuko and the "girl from the north"?

*The Just-So Stories* (1902) are rather legends and fables than real fairy stories; but they too were

conceived in Wonderland, the wonderland of the world's youth. They too enable us to 'see animals as primeval man saw them, not as types and numbers in an elaborate biological scheme of knowledge, but as walking portents, things marked by extravagant and peculiar features . . . to see which is not seeing a scientific species, but like seeing a man with three legs, or a bird with three wings, or men as trees walking.'

Of *Stalky and Co.* (1899), not a new *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, we would say little. It is daringly, almost brusquely realistic. A certain type of schoolboy has been here created, and will live for ever. But it is not a popular, scarcely an English, type. It does not dwell willingly in our imagination.

But, finally, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, author of *The Brushwood Boy*, has written *Kim* (1901). In that marvellous vignette from *The Day's Work*, and in 1901 the longer allegory, our author attains, as seldom A.D. —if ever—elsewhere, to the reality which is far above realism, the spiritual which embraces and permeates the material, the immortal which transcends mortality. Incidentally the most eloquent vindication of Eastern idealism ever penned, *Kim* reveals the two opposing influences which build up character.

The boy finds his way everywhere, understanding most things. To the subtlety and picturesque cunning of the races that fostered him he learns to annex that mysterious presence and self-confidence, that instinct for success and rule, which have established our empire. But permeating and purifying his young nature, preserving him on the one hand from becoming "a fearful man" like the Babu, and on the other from narrowing into an average sahib, stands that most lovable and saintly of personalities, the Tibetan lama. He has lived for many years among men, and found "no need to lie;" he holds that "to abstain from action is well, for all doing is evil." Totally indifferent to the chances of death or suffering, gazing

always upon the world with the wondering joy of a child, he is a true pilgrim, seeking "freedom from the wheel of things" in the river which "washes away all taint and speckle of sin." Yet he will put aside, for years if need be, the one desire of his heart for the sake of the child—retracing the journey of many days to give him "wisdom," enduring much chatter of women, and always patient. Therefore Kim honours him with the loving reverence which human nature must yield to so wholly spiritual a presence. Throughout his rough-and-tumble existence, within his boasting, cunning, vitally alive, and intensely curious little being, the "friend of all the world" is ever sensitive and loyal to the ideal of which his lama is the personification.

What, then, has Mr. Kipling achieved? The laureate of empire, though committing his chief indiscretions in verse to absent-minded beggars and "flannelled fools," has yet sung of the glories of progress and travel, the responsibilities of power, with no uncertain note. That supremely noble poem *Recessional*, *The Islanders*, and a few others, bespeak a national idealism which all men must honour, while the vivid verse pictures of barrack life and travel adventure present the energies of our race at their best.

In prose, again, Mr. Kipling is intensely alive, modern, and versatile; he worships efficiency, and finds occasion for boasting in the manifold traits of character evoked by conquest and the building of empires. With the master-journalist's keen eye for copy he notes every external detail of life, white and black, sordid or picturesque. He has the air of understanding everything and everybody. He presents his observations with wit and vivacity. His methods are absolutely realistic, in the best sense of the word; his style is daring, original, and splendidly vigorous, only erring, perhaps, by its fondness for obscure technical phraseology.

Yet, as a rule, we look in vain for the spiritual insight



and imagination behind so much restless brilliance. Is it not that he is suffering from the besetting sin of to-day's literature—its fatal reserve? He has our superficial expansiveness and our inartistic nakedness of expression; but, save for a few inspired moments, he has still hidden from a waiting public—himself, his visions, and his ideals.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### OTHER WRITERS OF THE TENTH ERA.

#### POETS.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1819–1861) presented in his poetry the two sides of an admirably balanced and complete natural humanity. Though the influence of Dr. Arnold at Rugby encouraged and stimulated his intellectual maturity, we learn that Clough was a good runner, an expert swimmer, and “the best boy goal-keeper on record.” At Oxford the all-permeating influence of the Tractarians compelled the attention of thoughtful minds to the deepest problems of existence; but no reader of Clough's great vacation idyll can fail to recognize his healthy and vigorous delight in the normal heritage of youth. For six years he remained in the centre of religious ferment, as fellow and tutor of Oriel; but in 1848 he determined upon a final severance from academic influences, tinged as they then were by a strong and definitely religious bias. During a brief period of leisure he published *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* (1848), by which he is chiefly remembered; and *Amours de Voyage*, inspired by a visit to Rome, “when from Janiculum heights thundered the cannon of France.” Four years later he migrated to Cambridge, Massachusetts, but returned in 1854, in order to take up an examinership in the Education Office and to marry. For six years he worked hard and lived happily, but

died on November 13, 1861 at Florence, during a holiday, undertaken in consequence of an unexpected physical breakdown. Although the *Bothie* will always remain Clough's most popular work, he really deserves to be remembered for those revelations of intellectual suspense and questioning, best exemplified in the two remarkable poems on *Easter Day*, which earned for him the sobriquet of our "Poet of Doubt."

COVENTRY KERSEY DIGHTON PATMORE (1823-1896) attained an almost phenomenal popularity by the issue, in 1854, of the first part of *The Angel in the House*, designed as an epic of married life, and contemplated in honour of his own experience. This volume celebrated *Bethrothal*, and he completed the cycle by *The Espousals*, *Faithful for Ever*, and *The Victories of Love*. A fatal tendency to the prosaic, combined with the frankly domestic character of his theme, induced a strong reaction against Patmore; and his claims to poetical power have been altogether denied. But discerning critics now recognize that such sweeping condemnation is no more justifiable than the former extravagant applause. Patmore, in fact, was a connoisseur in metre and rhythm; his *Angel in the House* is a treasury of exquisite sayings and descriptions.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894) was a sister of D. G. Rossetti. She was a contributor to *The Germ*, the famous organ of the pre-Raphaelites, over the signature of "Ellen Alleyn;" but she was in no sense one of the brotherhood. She wrote from her heart, and with deep feeling. Her verses were simple and musical. Unambitious in so far as never to attempt poetical dramas or largely-planned poems, her sonnets and lyrics are exquisite. Her works were collected from time to time, and published as *Goblin Market*, *The Prince's Progress*, *A Pageant*, etc.

JEAN INGELOW (1820-1897) will always rank high among English women poets, yielding pre-eminence, indeed, to only two—Mrs. Browning and Miss Rossetti.

She is, before all else, a singer, distinguished by her graceful fancy and lyric fluency. At times, indeed, Jean Ingelow revealed rare power in the description of nature ; and she is one of few successful modern writers of ballads. Too facile a poet to be really profound, she seldom attempted work beyond her power, and is never commonplace. The sympathetic understanding of children, revealed in many of her most charming poems, was also expressed in the delightful prose *Stories told to Children* (1865), in *Mopsa the Fairy* (1869), and other tales. These, indeed, are very superior to her novels, though the volume of fiction miniatures entitled *Studies for Stories* shows considerable power.

THOMAS EDWARD BROWN (1830-1897) probably reveals the most triumphant conquest of colloquial over literary English. Dealing almost entirely with the characters and scenes of his own Isle of Man, and writing for the most part in Manx dialect, he yet achieved rare poetical beauty, artistically finished and sustained. He is at once passionately romantic and genially humorous, always true to life, without a touch of coarseness. *Betsy Lee*, *Fo'c'sle Yarns*, *The Doctor*, and *The Manx Witch* stand by themselves in literature.

CHARLES STUART CALVERLEY (1831-1884) has made his name as a humorist. He wrote some admirable serious verse ; but this has been quite eclipsed by his parodies, which rank with the best in the language—with the *Rejected Addresses* of Horace and James Smith, and Thackeray's *Novels by Eminent Hands*. His chief work is contained in *Verses and Translations* and *Fly-Leaves* ; while the famous Pickwick examination paper has not been forgotten,—

JAMES THOMSON (1834-1882) author of *The City of Dreadful Night*, once wrote

“ Let my voice ring out and over the earth,  
Through all the grief and strife,  
With a golden joy in a silver mirth :  
Thank God for life.”

If unexpected, the utterance is, in fact, eminently characteristic of an exuberant nature crushed by neglect and poverty, the early death of his ideal woman, and an inherited craving for drink. Fame, indeed, came to Thomson before his death, but too late for comfort or strengthening. To-day we remember him chiefly for that last grim concentrated sculpture of a spectre-ridden metropolis where "sleep is not for the weary brain." But despite its mourning for love lost in death, his earliest work reveals a full capacity for joy; and even the poems of his middle period are gay and jubilant, full of sympathy with nature. He is the laureate of Hampstead Heath and of "Sunday up the river." In whatever mood, his work is vigorous, original, imaginative, and sincere.

ROBERT BUCHANAN (1841-1901), though at one time more widely known as a novelist with a purpose and a sensational playwright, will live by his poetry, which rises "from Seven Dials to the seventh heaven." His work, in fact, reveals two moods of seeming contradiction, each personal, sincere, and picturesque. On the one hand, in the *London Poems* and kindred pieces, he conquers most cruel realities by "the vigorous grip of the athlete who wrestles with things ugly and evil, and will not let them go until they whisper their secret of beauty." On the other he almost lifts the veil from the secrets of Divine providence in the mystic vision of *The Book of Orm, the Celt*. His masterly ballads are perhaps better known and equally original, and the longer narrative poems are impressive. On all we must recognize the stamp of genius.

ROBERT SEYMOUR BRIDGES (born 1844), appointed Poet-Laureate in 1913, is the most scholarly, the most classical, and the most artistic of our living poets. His tractate on *Milton's Prosody* (1893), the most illuminating contribution ever made to the study of English metre, affords triumphant evidence to his mastery of the subject. His practice but illustrates his theory. Recalling, without direct imitation, the

Miltonic manner, Mr. Bridges has given us much stately blank verse, some perfect sonnets, many dancing lyrics, and certain fine achievements in dramatic poetry which, if classic in subject and manner, are yet absolutely original. Much of Mr. Bridge's best work has been printed only at the private press of his friend, Mr. Daniel of Worcester College, Oxford; and he is, not unnaturally, best known by the slim volume *Shorter Poems* (1890), the dainty *Achilles in Scyros* (1890), and the oratorio entitled *Eden* (1891), performed at Birmingham to music by Professor Stanford. Never courting publicity, and not a copious writer, our poet has maintained a unique serenity in expression and a lofty standard of workmanship. But his care for form never stiffens his poetic grace or limits his fancy. All is varied and intuitive; the secret of his cultured labour is well kept. Besides the volumes already named, he has issued *Eros and Psyche* (1885), an allegory of love and the soul; *The Growth of Love* (1883), a sonnet-sequence; the statuesque *Prometheus the Fire-giver* (1883); the grim *Nero* (1885); *The Feast of Bacchus* (1889); and three plays—*Palicio*, *The Return of Ulysses*, and *The Christian Captives*.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY (1849-1903), perhaps most widely known as the intimate of Stevenson, and always generous in encouraging new writers, was himself a poet and critic of vigorous originality. The series of verses *In Hospital: Rhymes and Rhythms* (collected in his *Book of Verses*, 1888) were founded on personal experience, and contain his most characteristic work. They are chiefly remarkable for a certain daring realism in detail, combined with an almost passionate imagination and a touch at once swift and light. At other times Henley reveals himself as a purely lyrical singer of emotion, and his second volume, *The Song of the Sword* (1892), displays a wider compass and a richer quality, inspired by the ample spaciousness of nature. Henley edited and enlivened various magazines, wrote four plays in collaboration with R. L.







ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

*(Photo by Elliott and Fry.)*

Stevenson, and acquired a sound reputation as a critic of art and literature. Always passionate in conviction, he had assuredly a certain delight in hard hitting, but his powers of appreciation were no less sound and sympathetic.

WILLIAM WATSON (born 1858) is another poet distinguished by his dignity and restraint, but is far less original than Mr. Bridges, and at present has scarcely justified the high promise detected by the discerning in his early work. Essentially a literary writer, he has given us some fine appreciations of Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Shelley. His poetical ideals are exalted, and he has published nothing without distinction. The century of single quatrains entitled *Epigrams of Art, Life, and Nature* (1884) was an achievement in flawless compression, and his sonnets are elevated and impressive. Among his works may be mentioned *The Prince's Quest* (1880), *The Eloping Angels* (1893), and *The Hope of the World* (1897).

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (born 1865) is a poet of genuine inspiration and conscious simplicity. Intimately associated with the recent revival of Irish nationality in art and literature, he has become the recognized leader of new movements and activities in Dublin. Whether enshrining the legends of his beloved country in romantic prose tales, or singing her joys and her sorrows in musical verse, Mr. Yeats is essentially a poet, a child of nature, in thought and in expression. He has also edited, with Mr. E. J. Ellis, *The Works of William Blake*, and has himself a strong leaning towards mysticism. Among his tales, poems, and plays may be mentioned *The Wanderings of Oisín*, *The Countess Kathleen*, *The Secret Rose*, and *The Shadowy Waters*.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

FREDERICK LOCKFR-LAMPSON.—(1821-1895)—*London Lyrics*; *London Rhymes*, etc.; *Lyra Elegantiarum* (an anthology); *My Confidences* (an autobiography).

SYDNEY THOMPSON DOBELL.—(1824-1874)—*The Roman*; *England in Time of War*, etc.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.—(1824-1889)—*Songs, Poems, and Ballads*, etc

- ADELAIDE ANN PROCTER.—(1825–1864)—*Legends and Lyrics*, etc.
- GERALD MASSEY.—(1828–1907)—*Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*; *The Ballad of Babe Christabel*, etc. Mr. Massey is believed to have been the original of George Eliot's "Felix Holt."
- EDWARD ROBERT, EARL OF LYTTON.—(pseudonym, "Owen Meredith")—(1831–1891)—*Clytemnestra*; *The Wanderer*; *Lucile*, etc.
- SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.—(1832–1904)—K.C.I.E. 1887—poet and journalist—editor of *The Daily Telegraph*—*The Light of Asia*; *The Light of the World*, etc.
- SIR LEWIS MORRIS.—(1833–1907)—knighted 1895—*Songs of Two Worlds* (1872, 1874, 1875); *The Epic of Hades* (1876); *The Ode of Life* (1880); *Songs Unsung* (1883); *A Vision of Saints* (1890); *Idylls and Lyrics* (1896), etc.
- ALFRED AUSTIN.—(1835–1913)—Poet-Laureate from 1896—poet and essayist—*Randolph* (1861); *Alfred the Great*; *England's Darling*; *The Garden that I Love*; *A Tale of True Love*, etc.
- WILFRID SCAWEN BLUNT.—(born 1840)—*Sonnets and Songs* (1875); *The Wind and the Whirlwind* (1883); *The New Pilgrimage* (1889), etc.
- HENRY AUSTIN DOBSON.—(born 1840)—poet and essayist—*Vignettes in Rhyme* (1873); *Proverbs in Porcelain* (1877); *Old-World Idylls* (1883); *At the Sign of the Lyre* (1885); *Lives of Fielding* (1883), *Steele* (1886), *Goldsmith* (1888), *Horace Walpole* (1890), *Hogarth* (1891), *Richardson* (1902); *Eighteenth Century Vignettes* (1892, 1894, 1896); *A Paladin of Philanthropy* (1899); *Sidewalk Studies* (1902), etc.
- JOHN DAVIDSON.—(1857–1909)—poet and dramatist—*Bruce, a Chronicle Play* (1886); *Scaramouch in Naxos* (1889); *Fleet Street Eclogues* (1893–1895); *Ballads and Songs* (1894); *New Ballads* (1896); *Godfrida: a Play* (1888).
- A. MARY F. ROBINSON-DARMESTER.—(born 1857)—*A Handful of Honeysuckles* (1878); *Emily Brontë* (1883); *An Italian Garden, a Book of Songs* (1886); *Songs, Ballads, and a Garden Play* (1888), etc.
- NORMAN GALE.—(born 1862)—*A Country Muse* (1st series, 1892; 2nd series, 1893); *Cricket Songs* (1894); and *More Cricket Songs* (1905), etc.
- MICHAEL FIELD.—(a nom-de-plume adopted by Miss Bradley and Miss Cooper)—*Callirrhoe* (1884); *The Tragic Mary* (1890); *Underneath the Bough* (1893); *Attila, my Attila!* (1894), etc.
- RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.—(born 1866)—poet, essayist, and writer of tales—*My Ladies' Sonnets* (1887); *Book Bills of Narcissus* (1891); *English Poems* (1892); *Quest of the Golden Girl* (1896); *The Life Romantic* (1900), etc.
- STEPHEN PHILLIPS.—(born 1868)—poet, dramatist, and sometime an actor—*Eremus*; *Christ in Hades*; *Poems* (1897); *Paolo and Francesca*; *Herod*; *Ulysses*, etc.

#### DRAMATISTS.

SIR WILLIAM SCHWENCK GILBERT (1836–1911) is best known as the author of the librettos of the "Savoy Operas," to which the late Sir Arthur Sullivan con-

tributed the music—*Trial by Jury*, *The Sorcerer*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Patience*, *Iolanthe*, *Princess Ida*, *The Mikado*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, *The Gondoliers*. In most of these Gilbert started with some quaint conceit, which with great earnestness he worked out to a logical conclusion. His dialogue is usually humorous and his situations amusing. His verse is fantastic and often cynical, but always agreeable. He collected his poetry, and published it as *The Bab Ballads*. Gilbert has also written several plays, notably *The Palace of Truth*, *Pygmalion and Galatea*, *Charity*, *Sweethearts*, *Comedy and Tragedy*, etc., but not all of these have attracted the attention they deserve.

HENRY ARTHUR JONES (born 1851) was engaged in business until his twenty-eighth year. His first play of any importance was *A Clerical Error*, and his first great success *The Silver King*, a melodrama. These were followed by *The Middleman* (an exceptionally powerful play), *Judah*, *The Dancing Girl*, *The Masqueraders*, *Michael and his Lost Angel*, etc. As the years passed his treatment of subjects became lighter, as in *The Liars* and *Mrs. Dane's Defence*. *The Manceuvres of Jane* was a delightful and very clever farcical comedy. Jones is one of the most original living English dramatists, and he combines with a thorough knowledge of his craft an interesting vein of social satire.

SIR ARTHUR WING PINERO (born 1855) is one of the most prominent dramatists of the day. His earlier works were farce and comedy—*The Magistrate*, *The Schoolmistress*, *Dandy Dick*, and *The Hobby-Horse*. Subsequently he wrote the delightful *Sweet Lavender*, a play in which simple comedy and simple tragedy both have vent; but soon he returned to his earlier vein, and produced *The Weaker Sex*, *The Cabinet Minister*, and *The Amazons*. He had already written one play of a more serious kind, *The Profligate*; and more recently he has dealt with social problems in *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, *The Notorious Mrs.*

*Ebbsmith, The Benefit of the Doubt, The Gay Lord Quex, Iris, and Letty. The Princess and the Butterfly and Trelawny of the Wells* are charming plays, especially the latter.

OSCAR O'FLAHERTIE WILDE (1856-1900) was the author of several sparkling comedies of singular dramatic force, most obviously attractive from their brilliance in dialogue. Here, as in his other writings, prose or verse, he is always witty and not infrequently profound. Though generally blamed for cynicism, his plays have in reality a sounder moral significance than those of Sir A. W. Pinero. *A Woman of no Importance, Lady Windermere's Fan, The Ideal Husband, and The Importance of Being Earnest* will never lose their hold on the stage. Wilde wrote also many essays of subtle humour, a little fine poetry, and some exquisite fairy tales, intended for adult readers.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (born 1856) is an Irishman of brilliant versatility, at times somewhat disconcerting. A humorous novelist, disdaining the popular appeal, a sound writer on music, and a dramatic critic of audacious originality, he has almost succeeded in veiling the stern sincerity of his convictions on politics and social questions. Even the Fabian Society have been tempted at times to disavow the most fluent of their lecturers and tract-writers. Mr. Shaw seldom appears to be taking himself, or any one else, quite seriously. But of recent years this apparently irresponsible jester may almost be said to have founded a dramatic school. His witty and outspoken original plays—hitherto doomed to book issue—have been successfully performed by an enterprising management, and are very popular with the *élite*. They embody many advanced theories on personal morality, expressed with a happy combination of racy humour and flash-light subtlety. Among the novels may be mentioned *Cashel Byron's Profession* and *An Unsocial Socialist*; among his plays, *Arms and the Man, Candida, Mrs. Warren's Profession, and Man and Superman*.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- WILLIAM GORMAN WILLS.—(1828-1891)—*Charles I.*; *Eugene Aram*; *Jane Shore*; *Olivia* (founded on *The Vicar of Wakefield*), etc.
- SIR FRANCIS COWLEY BURNAND.—(born 1836)—knighted 1902—editor of *Punch*, 1862-1906—burlesque of *Black-Eyed Susan*, and many other burlesques and comedies, including *The Colonel*.
- HERMAN CHARLES MERIVALE.—(1839-1906)—*All for Her* (1874); *Forget-Me-Not* (1879); *The Butler* (1886); *The Don* (1888).
- SYDNEY GRUNDY.—(born 1848)—*In Honour Bound*; *The Silver Shield*; *Clito*; *A Fool's Paradise*; *A Pair of Spectacles*; *Haddon Hall*; *Sowing the Wind*; *A Bunch of Violets*; *The Degenerates*, etc. (mostly adaptations).
- LOUIS NAPOLEON PARKER.—(born 1852)—*Love-in-Idleness*; *The Mayflower*; *Rosemary*; *The Happy Life*, etc. (mostly in collaboration).
- CHARLES HADDON CHAMBERS.—(born 1860)—*Captain Swift*; *The Idler*; *The Tyranny of Tears*, etc.
- RICHARD CLAUDE CRICHT (pseudonym, R. C. Carton).—*Sunlight and Shadow*; *Liberty Hall*; *The Home Secretary*, etc.
- W. SOMERSET MAUGHAN.—(born 1874)—novelist and playwright—*Lady Frederick*; *Mrs. Dot*; *A Man of Honour*. Also of various tales—*Liza of Lambeth*, *Mrs. Craddock*, etc.
- See also—Sir J. M. Barrie, R. Browning, Robert Buchanan, Wilkie Collins, John Davidson, W. E. Henley, Anthony Hope, Douglas Jerrold, H. S. Leigh, George Moore, Stephen Phillips, Charles Reade, Robert Louis Stevenson.

## NOVELISTS.

GEORGE JOHN WHYTE-MELVILLE (1821-1878), soldier and sportsman, wrote songs and novels. His songs were agreeable enough, but have left no mark; and the same may be said of his historical romances, though *Katerfelto*, *Holmby House*, and *The Gladiators* are still read. He was at his best when writing sporting and social novels, such as *Market Harborough*, *The Brookes of Bridlemere*, *Black but Comely*, etc. Whyte-Melville's philosophy was not very deep, but his comments were shrewd and sound. Though he never wrote a novel with a purpose, he often inculcated a moral, always quite simple; and sometimes he preached a little man-of-the-world sermon. His books are valuable for the atmosphere and for the gallery of portraits which they contain. It may be said of them that they were written by a gentleman for gentlemen.

CHARLOTTE MARY YONGE (1823-1901) exerted a considerable influence in her generation by industrious and



serious purpose, united to a pleasing fluency in story-telling. Her effective historical summaries, and her many novels (also in the main historical) will always appeal to young readers, and their healthy morality was never didactic. *The Little Duke* is a classic. Perhaps *The Heir of Redclyffe* and *The Daisy Chain* were the most popular of her novels.

GEORGE MACDONALD (1824-1905) was a romantic novelist, who also wrote many charming poems and stories for children. He used the Scotch dialect (since so familiar to novel readers) with much dramatic effect. He was always preaching, but never dull. Author of *David Elginbrod*, *Alec Forbes*, *The Light Princess*, etc.

WILLIAM WILKIE COLLINS (1824-1889) was the son of the painter William Collins. His stories were always mysterious, yet always straightforward. In the construction of his plots he would employ the most marvellous coincidences; and he did not disdain to use the supernatural, somnambulism, or whatever would further his purpose. He regarded himself as a lay missionary, and in nearly every one of his books preached a sermon or endeavoured to found a crusade. There remains as a monument to his genius *The Woman in White*, *No Name*, *Armada*, *The Moonstone* (a magnificent story), and perhaps *Man and Wife* and *The New Magdalen*. He was not a great artist, neither was he in a high sense literary, but he possessed a good work-a-day style, his manner was distinctive, his meaning always clear, and at times he could write as tenderly and as humorously as some of his masters.

RICHARD DODDRIDGE BLACKMORE (1825-1900) was born at Longworth, in Berkshire, and therefore was not, as most readers of his books not unnaturally assume, a Devonshire man, though he spent some of his most impressionable years in that county. He was educated at Blundell's School in Tiverton and at Oxford. Then he studied law, was called to the Bar, and practised as a conveyancer. Among his earliest literary work was a translation of the *Georgics*; but

he soon turned from the classics to the writing of novels, one of which, in its turn, has become a classic. His principal stories were *Clara Vaughan* (1864), *Cradock Nowell*, *Alice Lorraine*, *Springhaven*, *Christowell*, *Cripps the Carrier*, *Mary Anerley*, and *Lorna Doone: a Romance of Exmoor*. It is upon the last of these that Blackmore's fame rests in the popular mind. Indeed, *Lorna Doone* is a magnificent story, well written, with beautiful descriptions of scenery, a well-constructed plot, and admirably-conceived characters. The immense success of this book has thrown into comparative shadow the author's other works; but they also are admirable and well worth reading, not only for the romance that is in them, but for the knowledge of men and women, and for the appreciations of nature which they contain. Blackmore also wrote *Tales from the Telling-House* (1896), stories and legends of country life, and a volume of quaint, rough, delightful poems entitled *Fringilla* (1895).

HENRY KINGSLEY (1830-1876) was the younger brother of Charles. The popularity of the works of the latter for many years overshadowed the writings of the former. Yet Henry Kingsley's novels are far too good to be allowed to fall into oblivion. After spending some years in Australia, where for a time he served in the mounted police, he returned to England, and published *The Recollections of Geoffrey Hamlyn* and *The Hillyars and the Burtons*, in which he embodied his colonial experiences. *Ravenshoe* (1861) is perhaps the best story he ever wrote, while other works of merit are *Austin Elliot* and *Stretton*. He was no stylist, and the construction of his books left much to be desired; but his writings are manly and strong, and he possessed undeniable humour and much pathos.

MRS. HUMPHRY WARD (born 1851) has made the religious novel popular. In *Robert Elsmere* she endeavoured to promulgate a new theology, which she has since acknowledged as Unitarianism, and the later books are one and all inspired by serious thought

and reverent speculation. Her characters are vividly realized, showing much sympathetic insight into human nature. As a story each work has its own absorbing interest. Author of *David Grieve*, *Marcella*, *Eleanor*, *Sir George Tressady*, *The Marriage of William Ashe*, *Lady Rose's Daughter*, *Diana Mallory*, etc.

GEORGE GISSING (1857-1903) was a novelist of considerable power, whose work has been not unnaturally regarded as pre-eminently typical of the artistic temperament struggling with sordidness in real life. His *The Unclassed*, his *Thyrza*, and his *New Grub Street*, indeed, betray a certain stern cynicism never tampering with truth, and much keen observation of undesirable qualities in human nature. But *The Crown of Life* is the work of a true idealist, picturing the perfect marriage, attained through mistakes courageously repudiated, without which life spells failure and degradation. His *Private Papers of Henry Rycroft* are instinct with imagination.

SIR JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE (born 1860) is a novelist and playwright of much repute. *Auld Licht Idylls* (1888) and *A Window in Thrums* (1889) founded the "kailyard" school of novelists, and stand unrivalled as humorous pictures of Scotch peasant life. In *The Little Minister* similar subjects are handled with special reference to the kirk, while *Sentimental Tommy* (1896) and its no less charming sequel, *Tommy and Grizel* (1900) reveal that sympathetic understanding of child-nature which afterwards ensured the success of *Peter Pan* (1904), the most popular play for children of modern times. Mr. Barrie, indeed, is now more widely known as a dramatist than as a story-writer. His *Quality Street* (1903), recalling *Cranford*, was a peculiarly exquisite "bit of antique;" *Little Mary* (1903) introduced a new slang phrase into the language; and *The Admirable Crichton* (1903) won all hearts by its subtle and original humour.

ANTHONY HOPE (HAWKINS) (born 1863), has written with marked literary charm in two apparently diverse

manners. His *Prisoner of Zenda* (1894) and many kindred novels depend on a subtle blending of character analysis and pure romance; while *The Dolly Dialogues* (1901) has created a *fin de siècle* society type for all time, and books like *Quisanti* (1901) are skilfully modelled on the political life of the day.

H. G. WELLS (born 1866) has devoted himself for the most part to the weaving of romances ingeniously developed from conditions in which mankind may at any time be placed by the advance of science. But *Love and Mr. Lewisham* (1900) and *Kipps* (1905) display a power in true realism and treat of a class hitherto little exploited in fiction, but playing their part in modern life. Books like *Mankind in the Making* (1903), on the other hand, bear witness to original thought and reasoned daring in speculation upon the ultimate problems of the universe.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

THOMAS HUGHES.—(1823-1896)—County Court judge—*Scouring of the White Horse*; *Tom Brown's School-Days*; *Tom Brown at Oxford*.

ROBERT M. BALLANTYNE.—(1825-1894)—*Hudson Bay*; *Martin Rattler*; *The Coral Island*, and other boys' stories.

MRS. CRAIK (Dinah Maria Mulock).—(1826-1887)—*The Ogilvies* (1849); *John Halifax, Gentleman* (1857), etc.

MRS. OLIPHANT (Margaret Oliphant Wilson).—(1828-1897)—*Chronicles of Carlingford*; *The Primrose Path*; *Lilliesleaf*; *Salem Chapel*, and many other novels. Also *Life of Edward Irving*.

JAMES PAYN.—(1830-1898)—Cheltenham—editor of *Chambers's Journal* and of *The Cornhill Magazine*—*Lost Sir Massingberd*; *By Proxy*; *The Heir of the Ages*, etc.

JOSEPH HENRY SHORTHOUSE.—(1834-1903)—*John Inglesant* (1881), etc.

SIR WALTER BESANT (1836-1901)—novelist and essayist; and JAMES RICE (1844-1882)—editor of *Once a Week*. In collaboration, *Ready-money Mortiboy*; *The Golden Butterfly*, etc. Sir Walter Besant also wrote *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*; *The Children of Gibeon*, etc.

OUIDA (Louise de la Ramée).—(1840-1908)—*Held in Bondage*; *Strathmore*; *Chandos*; *Under Two Flags*; *Tricotrin*; *Puck*; *The Massarenes*, etc.

WILLIAM BLACK.—(1841-1898)—*In Silk Attire*; *A Daughter of Heth*; *A Princess of Thule*, etc.

MRS. FLORA ANNIE STEEL.—(born 1847)—*From the Five Rivers*; *The Potter's Thumb*; *On the Face of the Waters*; *In the Permanent Way*; *The Hosts of the Lord*, etc.

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- LUCAS MALET (Mrs. Mary St. Leger Harrison).—(born 1852)—daughter of Charles Kingsley—*The Wages of Sin*; *The Gateless Barrier*; *History of Sir Richard Calmady*, etc.
- STANLEY JOHN WEYMAN.—(born 1855)—*A Gentleman of France*; *Under the Red Robe*; *Sophia*, etc.
- MRS. M. L. WOODS.—(born 1856)—novelist and poet—*A Village Tragedy*; *Esther Vanhomrigh*; *Wild Justice*; *The Invader*, etc.
- ISRAEL ZANGWILL.—(born 1864)—novels on Jewish life, also essayist, poet, and playwright—*The Children of the Ghetto*; *Dreamers of the Ghetto*; *The Mantle of Elijah*, etc.
- JOHN OLIVER HOBBS (Mrs. Craigie).—(1867–1907)—novelist and playwright—*Some Emotions and a Moral*; *The School for Saints*; *Robert Orange*, etc.; and *The Wisdom of the Wise*; *The Bishop's Move*, etc.

### HISTORIANS.

WILLIAM STUBBS (1825–1901), sometime Bishop of Chester, and subsequently Bishop of Oxford, is the chief authority upon English Constitutional History; and his great book, *The Constitutional History of England in its Origin and Development*, holds its position as the definitive work on the subject.

SAMUEL RAWSON GARDINER (1829–1902) was educated at Winchester and Christ Church, Oxford. He was appointed Professor of History in King's College, London, in 1874, and ten years later All Souls' College, Oxford, elected him to a fellowship. When Froude died in 1894 he was offered the Regius Professorship of History at Oxford; but he refused the post, so that he might be able to continue to devote himself to his life's work. The task he had set himself was to write the history of England from the death of Elizabeth to the Restoration. His sympathies were with the Roundheads; but he was pre-eminently impartial, and his portraits of the Cavaliers are admirably just. Gardiner was most painstaking and industrious. He was accurate in his facts, and though he did not content himself with stating the case, but also pronounced judgment, as a rule there is little fault to be found with his sentences. His principal writings are *History of England during the Stuart Period*, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate*, and *The Thirty Years' War*.

SIR JOHN ROBERT SEELEY (1834-1895), K.C.M.G. 1894, was educated at the City of London School, and Christ's College, Cambridge. He was appointed, in 1863, Professor of Latin in University College, London, and six years later accepted the chair of Modern History at Cambridge. He published in 1865 the famous *Ecce Homo*. This book, which by many was thought to be an attempt to undermine the Christian faith, exercised no small influence upon the author's contemporaries. It was published anonymously, but its authorship was soon suspected. *The Life and Times of Stein* (1879) and a *Short Life of Napoleon the First* (1885) were valuable contributions to the history of the periods concerned. *The Expansion of England* (1883) was one of his most popular works.

JOHN EMERICH EDWARD DALBERG-ACTON, afterwards Lord Acton (1834-1902), the most learned and scholarly of modern historians, was for many years Professor of History at Cambridge, and also intimately associated with the Court. He published no long works, but profound essays on the Vatican decrees, Wolsey, and the German schools of history. He also planned and initiated the great *Cambridge Modern History*.

JOHN RICHARD GREEN (1837-1883) was educated at Magdalen College School and Jesus College, Oxford. His most valuable work is the *Short History of the English People*. As he stated in his introduction to the first volume, it is a history dealing not with English kings or English conquest, but with the national characteristics of the people. He passed lightly over foreign wars and diplomacies, the pomps of kings and courts, and dwelt at length on the constitutional, intellectual, and social advance of the nation itself, devoting, for instance, more space to the Poor Law of Elizabeth than to her victory at Cadiz. It is a great and unique book. He began to write a history on a larger plan; but at his death he had only published *The Making of England* and *The Conquest of England*.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY (born 1847) has published



many brilliant and authoritative monographs on political leaders of the past, of which perhaps his *Napoleon : the Last Phase* (1900) is the most original. He also issued *Pitt* ("English Statesmen" series) in 1891, *Sir Robert Peel* in 1899, and *Oliver Cromwell* in 1900; besides an interesting volume of miscellaneous *Appreciations and Addresses* in 1899.

VISCOUNT MORLEY (born 1838), who has been for many years one of the leaders of the Liberal party, and always remembered by his monumental *Life of Gladstone* (1903), has written a number of biographical and critical essays, specially distinguished for their style. He is a recognized authority on the "Encyclopædists," having issued striking books on Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot. His *Burke* (1879) and *Cobden* (1881) are no less standard, while in his essay *On Compromise* (1874) and other miscellaneous essays he reveals the energy in moral principles and independence of thought which has marked his public life.

W. E. H. LECKY (1838-1903) was a philosophical historian, best known for his standard *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (1878-90). He also published a remarkable *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne* (1869).

THE RIGHT HON. JAMES BRYCE (born 1838), a recognized authority on historical jurisprudence, is most widely known for his monumental work on *The American Commonwealth* (1888). He has also published *The Holy Roman Empire* (1862), *Impressions of South Africa* (1897); and the attractive *Studies in Contemporary Biography* (1903).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- DAVID MASSON.—(1822-1907)—first editor of *Macmillan's Magazine*—*Life of John Milton*; *Biographical and Critical Essays*, etc.  
 SIR HENRY JAMES SUMNER MAINE.—(1822-1888)—K.C.S.L. 1871—*Village Communities in the East and West*; *The Early History of Institutions*; *Early Law and Custom*; *Popular Government*.  
 GOLDWIN SMITH.—(1823-1910)—Reading—Professor of Modern History at Oxford, at Ithaca (New York), and at Toronto—*Three English Statesmen* (Pym, Hampden, Cromwell).  
 GEORGE BRUCE MALLESON.—(1825-1898)—edited *The Calcutta*

*Review—Decisive Battles of India; History of the French in India; History of the Indian Mutiny.*

JAMES GAIRDNER.—(born 1828)—*The Houses of Lancaster and York; Henry VII.; The English Church in the Sixteenth Century*, etc.

JUSTIN M'CARTHY.—(1830-1912)—historian, novelist, essayist—*The History of Our Own Times; History of the Four Georges; Portraits of the Sixties*, etc.

SIR GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN.—(born 1838)—*Letters of a Competition Wallah; Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay; The Early History of Charles James Fox; The American Revolution*, etc.

JOHN PENTLAND MAHAFFY.—(born 1839)—*Greek Social Life; Alexander's Empire; The Empire of the Ptolemies*, etc.

MANDELL CREIGHTON.—(1843-1901)—sometime Bishop of London—*History of the Papacy during the Reformation Period*, etc

#### ESSAYISTS AND CRITICS.

JAMES HINTON (1822-1875), the son of a distinguished Baptist minister, was an original thinker of considerable influence on his generation. He attempted to interpret the results of scientific discovery by moral reason. Best known by his *Mystery of Pain* (1865).

FRIEDRICH MAX-MÜLLER (1823-1900), successively Taylorian Professor of Modern Languages, and, from 1868, of Comparative Philology at Oxford. He popularized the history of language and kindred subjects. His *Chips from a German Workshop* (1868-75) contained many interesting reflections on quasi-scientific subjects.

FREDERIC HARRISON (born 1831), philosopher, historian, and critic, is generally regarded as the chief apostle of Positivism, or the Religion of Humanity. He has written, however, on many subjects, and is always illuminating and suggestive. *The Meaning of History* (1862) and *William the Silent* (1897) are standard works, and no student of nineteenth-century movements can neglect his studies of *Ruskin* and *Herbert Spencer*.

SIR LESLIE STEPHEN (1832-1904) will always be remembered as the original editor of *The Dictionary of National Biography*. But he published many separate volumes of culture and thoughtful miscellaneous criticism, among which may be mentioned *Hours in a Library*, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, and *The English Utilitarians*.

WALTER HORATIO PATER (1839-1894) is the chief

literary figure of modern Oxford. His writings are exquisitely polished, and full of beautiful touches and happy phrases; yet it must be admitted that his felicities are rarely spontaneous and often over-elaborated. Notwithstanding these defects, Pater ranks as one of the few master-stylists of the later half of the last century. He was an admirable art critic, and published articles on Winckelmann, Da Vinci, Botticelli, Watteau, Michael Angelo, and other artists. His chief books are *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, *Imaginary Portraits*, *Appreciations*, *Greek Studies*, and *Plato and Platonism*. *Marius the Epicurean* is his masterpiece.

SIR CHARLES WENTWORTH DILKE (1843-1911) is an accomplished writer, who has long been regarded as one of the greatest authorities on political and military questions, so far as they affect international affairs. His *Greater Britain* (1868) has run through many editions, and was followed in 1890 by *Problems of Greater Britain*. He also published important volumes on *Imperial Defence*, *The British Army*, *The British Empire*, and *European Politics*.

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON (born 1874) is one of the most brilliant and original of our younger writers. Primarily a journalist, he has a style of his own which is quite unmistakable and always arresting. His somewhat paradoxical optimism and infectious geniality have found sympathetic subjects in his monographs on Browning, Watts, and Dickens. He has also published several collected essays, a remarkable volume of poetry (cordially praised by Mr. George Meredith), and some daringly fantastic tales of modern life.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- RICHARD HOLT HUTTON.—(1826-1897)—sometime editor of *The Spectator*—*Modern Guides of English Thought; Contemporary Thought and Thinkers; Essays, Theological and Literary*, etc.
- WALTER W. SKEAT.—(1835-1912)—Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Cambridge—Editions of *Piers the Plowman*, *Chaucer*, etc.; *Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*.
- RICHARD GARNETT, C.B., LL.D.—(1835-1905)—*Essays on Carlyle, Emerson, Milton, Blake*, etc.; *History of Italian Literature*, etc.
- JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.—(1840-1893)—*Introduction to the Study*

- of Dante; *Studies of the Greek Poets*; *The Renaissance in Italy*; *Shakespeare's Predecessors in the English Drama*, etc.
- EDWARD DOWDEN.—(born 1843)—*Shakespeare, his Mind and Art*; *History of French Literature*; standard *Life of Shelley*, etc.
- ANDREW LANG.—(born 1844)—originally won fame as a poet, by such works as *Ballads and Lyrics of Old France*, *Rhymes à la Mode*, and *Grass of Parnassus*. He is a distinguished folklorist and anthropologist (*Custom and Myth*; *Cock Lane and Common Sense*, etc.); a historian (*Prince Charles Edward*; *History of Scotland*); a classical scholar (*Homer and the Epic*, etc.); and one of the most delightful essayists of the day (*Books and Bookmen*; *Letters to Dead Authors*; *Letters on Literature*). He has also written novels and edited many fairy-tale books. As a translator he is probably the best of our generation, and his versions of *Theocritus* and of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (along with Samuel Henry Butcher) are in some ways his most enduring contributions to literature.
- GEORGE EDWARD BATEMAN SAINTSBURY.—(born 1845)—*The History of Criticism from the Earliest Times to the Present*; *Corrected Impressions*; *Short History of English Literature*, etc.
- JOHN CHURTON COLLINS.—(1848-1908)—*A Study of English Literature*; *Essays and Criticisms*; *Ephemera Critica*, etc.
- W. H. MALLOCK.—(born 1849)—essayist, novelist, etc.—*The New Republic*; *A Romance of the Nineteenth Century*; *Aristocracy and Evolution*, etc.
- EDMUND GOSSE.—(born 1849)—essayist, poet, and biographer—*On Viol and Flute* (1873); *King Erik* (1876); *New Poems* (1879); *Lives of Gray* (1882), *Congreve* (1888), *P. H. Gosse* (1890), *Life and Letters of Dr. Donne* (1899); *Questions at Issue* (1893); *Critical Kit-Kats* (1896), etc.
- RT. HON. AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.—(born 1850)—*Lives of Charlotte Brontë and Hazlitt*; *Obiter Dicta*; *Res Judicata*, etc.
- WILLIAM LEONARD COURTNEY.—(born 1850)—essayist and journalist—editor of *The Fortnightly Review*—*The Metaphysics of J. S. Mill*; *Constructive Ethics*; *Studies at Leisure*; *Undine*; *Literary Man's Bible*, etc.
- SIR OLIVER JOSEPH LODGE.—(born 1851)—known as a popular writer on many scientific subjects, who has more recently identified himself with the advance of psychical research, and endeavoured to establish a new (philosophical) religion.
- SIDNEY LEE.—(born 1859)—succeeded Sir Leslie Stephen as editor of *The Dictionary of National Biography*—*Lives of Shakespeare, Queen Victoria*, etc.
- G. LOWES DICKINSON.—(born 1867)—*Letters of John Chinaman*; *Religion: A Criticism and a Forecast*; *A Modern Symposium*, etc.

## THEOLOGIANs AND SCHOLARs.

BENJAMIN JOWETT (1817-1895), sometime Master of Balliol College, Oxford, was almost better known for his caustic conversation and energetic personality than by his books. Yet his translations of Plato, of Aris-

totle, and of Thucydides secured a world-wide reputation, no less characteristic of the man than his commentary on the *Epistles to Galatians, Thessalonians, and Romans*, his *College Sermons*, or his famous essay *On the Interpretation of Scripture*.

BROOKE FOSS WESTCOTT (1825-1901), Bishop of Durham, was occupied with Dr. Hort for twenty-eight years over their monumental *New Testament in Greek* (1881). He also wrote a *History of the New Testament Canon* (1855), a *Study of the Gospels* (1860), and other commentaries and important works on the miracles, the resurrection, and the Apostles' Creed.

JOSEPH BARBER LIGHTFOOT (1828-1889), Bishop of Durham, was one of the leading workers on the Revised Version of the New Testament and an authority on early post-Biblical Christian literature. It has been said that, in his numerous commentaries, each point is illuminated by a brilliant little historical essay. He was a hard worker on university affairs, and had a very wide influence at Cambridge.

FENTON JOHN ANTHONY HORT (1828-1892), in addition to collaborating with Dr. Westcott in the work named above, published *The Way, the Truth, and the Life* (Hulsean Lectures, 1893); *Judaistic Christianity* (1894); and *Christian Ecclesia* (1897). He was a very profound thinker and scholar.

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON (1834-1892) is better known as a preacher than as a writer. He was the pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and there he delivered most of his sermons, which, published week by week, had an immense circulation. His best known books are *The Saint and his Saviour*, *Sermons in Candles*, and *Messages to the Multitude*.

ANDREW MARTIN FAIRBAIRN (1838-1912), the late Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, published many thoughtful studies in the history of religion, a volume of sermons entitled *The City of God*, and a brief review of *Catholicism: Roman and Anglican*. In his *Philosophy of the Christian Religion*



RUDYARD KIPLING.

*(Photo by Elliott and Fry.)*





(1902) he stepped into the arena of modern polemics, with the resolute determination of maintaining that Christianity has no occasion to turn its face from the most searching investigation of the learned, or the most complicated requirements of civilized life.

SAMUEL ROLLES DRIVER, Regius Professor of Hebrew, and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford (born 1846), author of *Isaiah: His Life and Times*, *The Book of Genesis*, and other commentaries, is one of the most prominent expounders of the "higher criticism," which by submitting the books of the Bible to historical and scholarly comparison with contemporary literature, attempts to establish a scientific basis for theology.

CLAUDE J. G. MONTEFIORE (born 1858) is the most able exponent of advanced thought among modern Jews. In *Liberal Judaism* (1903) he maintains that the most conservative of all religions "still has a message and a mission, a distinct place in the religious economy of the world; it is still capable of progress, purification, and development."

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- JOHN CAIRD.—(1820-1898)—Greenock—Principal of the University of Glasgow—*Sermons; Religion in Common Life; Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*.
- JOHN TULLOCH.—(1823-1886)—Bridge of Earn—Principal of St. Mary's College at St. Andrews—*Theism* (Burnett prize essay); *Leaders of the Reformation; English Puritanism*.
- FREDERIC WILLIAM FARRAR.—(1831-1903)—Bombay—Dean of Canterbury—*Life of Christ; Early Days of Christianity; Darkness and Dawn*.
- HENRY BARCLAY SWETE.—(born 1835)—*Patristic Study; History of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, etc.
- HENRY DRUMMOND.—(1851-1897)—*Natural Law in the Spiritual World; Ascent of Man; The Greatest Thing in the World*, etc.
- WILFRID PHILIP WARD.—(born 1856)—*The Wish to Believe; Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman*, etc.
- REGINALD JOHN CAMPBELL.—(born 1867)—*Christianity and the Social Order; The New Theology*, etc.

#### PHILOSOPHERS.

WILLIAM STANLEY JEVONS (1835-1882) was an economist and logician, who largely devoted himself to popularizing and systematizing Boole's original con-

tributions to *The Laws of Thought*. He was mainly interested in pure logic or the logic of quality, and his *Principles of Science* (1874) is a standard work.

EDWARD CAIRD (1835-1908), Master of Balliol College, Oxford, wrote standard works on the philosophies of Kant, Hegel, and Comte. His other important volumes are *The Evolution of Religion* (1893) and *Greek Theology in the Greek Philosophers* (1901). *Law and Freedom* and *Individual Immortality* bear yet further witness to his influence on men's thoughts concerning the deepest problems of existence.

THOMAS HILL GREEN (1836-1882) was one of the most brilliant thinkers of his day, whose contagious enthusiasm had much influence. His chief works are his masterly introduction to Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature* (containing a searching and hostile criticism by an idealist), the *Prolegomena to Ethics*, and two *Lay Sermons*. Green took a deep interest in all social questions, and did much work for popular education.

HENRY SIDGWICK (1838-1900), Professor of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge, was one of the most profound thinkers of modern times. His was a Greek intellect—sane, critical, and in a sense unproductive. But that very genius for seeing both sides, illuminated as it was by polished humour and incisive style, rendered his presence and conversation unceasingly and penetratingly suggestive. Besides advancing his professorial subjects and stimulating thought, Dr. Sidgwick was of the first and foremost among the champions of education for women, and proved himself a pioneer to the last by his unfailing enthusiasm for that most advanced but only recently accredited branch of human knowledge—the arrangement and classification of psychical phenomena. His chief works were *The Ethics of Conformity and Subscription* (1871), *Methods of Ethics* (1874), *Principles of Political Economy* (1883), and *The Elements of Politics* (1891).

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS (1843-1901), originally known for his graceful *St. Paul* and other poems,

acquired a far more general and possibly more permanent reputation as the author of a monumental work on *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*—at present the most popular expression of the work accomplished by psychical research. Mr. Myers went a step further than most of his more cautious co-workers; but his imaginative eloquence carries a powerful appeal to mankind; and it must not be supposed that either his claim for a scientific proof of immortality, or his “provisional sketch of a religious synthesis,” *revealed from the Beyond*, is set forth without a mass of supporting evidence. Whether we accept his conclusions, or whether we hold with others no less enthusiastic in the same search after truth that these are as yet but plausible theorizings, it cannot be denied that Mr. Myers has done an incalculable service to mankind, in pointing to the dawn awaiting the final union between the most advanced scientific thought and the most profound religious conviction.

F. H. BRADLEY (born 1846), half-brother of the late Dean of Westminster, is a writer of great distinction on metaphysics, ethics, and logic; and his *Appearance and Reality* (1893) is one of the most striking and original books on philosophy which have appeared during the last fifty years.

THE RIGHT HON. ARTHUR J. BALFOUR (born 1848) has found time, in the intervals of his political activity, to issue several weighty volumes of original philosophy, distinguished for their grace of style. His *Defence of Philosophic Doubt* (1879) and *The Foundation of Belief* (1895) are thoughtful and persuasive; his *Essays and Addresses* are admirable *causeries* on men and creeds; and *Reflections Suggested by the New Theory of Matter* shows the variety of his interests.

#### SCIENTIFIC WRITERS.

FRANCIS GALTON (1822-1911) will always be inseparably associated in the public mind with the

problems of heredity. An indefatigable collector of statistics, with imagination to theorize, his *Hereditary Genius* (1869) and his *Natural Inheritance* (1889) are standard works on a fascinating subject. He also published *Finger Prints* (1893) and several volumes of travel.

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE (1823-1913) shares with Darwin the honour of having been among the earliest to advocate the theory of natural selection. He has even gone further than the better-known biologist in many of his theories. He has a vigorous style, and states his case in a clear manner. He has taken his place among the great scientists as the author of *The Theory of Natural Selection*, *Darwinism*, *Studies Scientific and Social*, etc. He also wrote on social subjects, such as *Land Nationalization*.

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY (1825-1895), sometime President of the Royal Society, was an eminent biologist. Until the publication of *The Origin of Species* he was not in the foreground, though he did useful work; but after the issue of Darwin's great book he became famous as the most powerful advocate of the evolutionary theory. Perhaps he will best be remembered as the "popularizer" of that idea. He was famous as a lecturer, and was fortunate in being able to deliver addresses on scientific subjects in terms that made them intelligible to the ordinary man. His style was lucid and forcible, and often controversial. Indeed, he became well known as a fighter. His controversies with Bishop Wilberforce and Mr. Gladstone attracted much interest. He was one of the few men of science whose works rank as literature. His most important book is *Man's Place in Nature*.

THE RIGHT HON. LORD AVEBURY, better known as Sir John Lubbock (1834-1913) is perhaps the most popular scientific writer of the day. He has published volumes which reach the public understanding on almost every branch of science, though his monographs on ants and bees are the best known. This

versatile writer has also given us various volumes of popular philosophy—*The Pleasures of Life*, *The Use of Life*—suggested a “choice of books,” and disseminated information on many questions concerning politics and literature.

JAMES GEIKIE (born 1839), though primarily a geologist and expert on *The Great Ice Age*, has also issued some translations of Heine and done much to popularize his subject.

SIR ROBERT S. BALL, Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge (born 1840), is perhaps most generally known by *The Story of the Heavens*, though many of his books and papers are full of interest to the general reader.

EDWARD CLODD (born 1840) has opened the eyes of the public to many fascinating lines of thought revealed by the labours of scientific men. His *Childhood of the World* (1872) and *The Story of Creation* (1888) represent the latest research, and his monograph on Huxley (1902) is worthy of its subject.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

JOHN TYNDALL.—(1820–1893)—*Heat Considered as a Mode of Motion*; *Six Lectures on Light*, etc.

LORD KELVIN.—(1824–1907)—*Electrostatics and Magnetism* (1872), etc.

SIR WILLIAM CROOKES.—(born 1832)—the discoverer of thallium—*The Wheat Problem*; *Genesis of Elements*; *Radiant Matter*, etc.

SIR J. NORMAN LOCKYER.—(born 1836)—*The Chemistry of the Sun* (1887); *The Dawn of Astronomy* (1894); *Inorganic Evolution* (1900), etc.

LORD RAYLEIGH.—(born 1842)—Chancellor of the University of Cambridge—*Theory of Sound*, and numerous important scientific papers.

SIR EDWIN RAY LANKESTER.—(born 1847)—zoologist—*Comparative Longevity*; *Degeneration*, etc.

#### TRAVELLERS AND GEOGRAPHERS.

SIR SAMUEL WHITE BAKER (1821–1893) undertook the exploration of the Nile by ascending its current. His brave wife accompanied him. In 1864 he discovered a very large lake, to which he gave the name Albert Nyanza. Baker tells the story of his explorations with more elegance than Speke or Livingstone.



JOHN HANNING SPEKE (1827-1864), a captain in the Indian army, explored (1857-62) the basin of the Upper Nile, having started from Zanzibar. He fixed the true position of the Mountains of the Moon, and in 1858 discovered the vast lake Victoria Nyanza. A brother officer named JAMES AUGUSTUS GRANT (1827-92) accompanied him on his travels, and aided him in the preparation of his *Journal*. Grant is also the author of *A Walk Across Africa* and *The Botany of the Speke and Grant Expedition*. Speke was killed by the accidental discharge of his own gun.

MISS MARY H. KINGSLEY (1862-1900), niece of Charles Kingsley, in a few years of courageous travel, established herself as an authority on the West Coast of Africa. Her *Travels in West Africa* (1897) and *West African Studies* (1899) abound in fascinating personal touches, thrilling narratives, and really valuable observation. During two excursions she explored the Fan country, went down the dangerous rapids of the Ogowé above N'ogile, and ascended Mungo Mah Lobeh.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

SIR RICHARD F. BURTON (1821-1890) wrote the *Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Mecca*, and many books on travels in Africa.

VERNEY LOVETT CAMERON (1844-94), who headed a Livingstone search expedition in 1872, succeeded only in ascertaining the fact of the great traveller's death and in rescuing his papers. Cameron then plunged into the heart of Africa, and emerged on the west coast. His adventurous travels are recorded in his work *Across Africa*.

An interesting and valuable account of the *Challenger* deep-sea exploring expedition was published by Sir C. WYVILLE THOMSON (1830-1882), the head of its scientific staff.—The daring exploits of Captain FREDERICK G. BURNABY (1842-1885) in Western Asia are graphically described in his *Ride to Khiva*, and *On Horseback through Asia Minor*.—One of the most interesting of recent books of travel is the late Lady BRASSEY's account of her voyage round the world, entitled *A Voyage in the "Sunbeam."*

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#### SOME OVERSEA WRITERS.

##### *Canada.*

CHARLES GEORGE DOUGLAS ROBERTS (born 1860) has issued many volumes in prose and verse. His

*Orion and other Poems* (1880), and *New York Nocturnes* (1898), were followed by the thoughtful *Earth's Enigmas* (1896), the charming *Barbara Ladd* (1903), and various collections of animal tales, which by many are said to rival *The Jungle Books* of Mr. Kipling. Of these the best known are *The Kindred of the Wild* (1902), *The Red Fox* (1905), and *Hunters of the Silences* (1907).

SIR GILBERT PARKER (born 1862) is one of our most popular novelists and dramatists. His *Seats of the Mighty* was the story which made his reputation, but *The Trail of the Sword* and *When Valmond came to Pontiac* are in no way inferior. He knows Canadian life and history, and his novels are eminently dramatic.

### *Australia.*

THOMAS ALEXANDER BROWNE (Rolf Boldrewood), was born in London in 1826, but spent his earlier life as a pioneer squatter and police magistrate of the goldfields. His novels abound in stirring adventure, and have been universally recognized as splendid pictures of Colonial life. The principal names are *Robbery under Arms* (1888), *The Squatter's Dream* (1895), *Babes in the Bush* (1900), and *Tales of the Golden West* (1906).

ADAM LINDSAY GORDON (1833-1870), the laureate of the Bush, though not a native of Australia, certainly found his best inspiration under her genial skies. His first volume was characteristically entitled *Sea-spray and Smoke-drift* (1867), and he afterwards issued *Ashtaroth* and *Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes*. Gordon, though reminiscent of both Browning and Swinburne, has the true Colonial swing and passion for wild nature.

### *South Africa.*

GEORGE M'CALL THEAL (born in New Brunswick, 1837), is the author of a standard *History of South Africa* and other important historical works.

SIR JAMES PERCY FITZPATRICK (born at King William's Town in 1862), who accompanied the Randolph Churchill expedition to Mashonaland, is the author of an important work on the history of our most recently-acquired colonies. His *The Transvaal from Within* is the most authoritative statement of the British case for the South African war. *The Outspan* is a delightful volume of bushveld tales, and *Jock of the Bushveld* may be described as an African *Jungle Book* but little inferior to Mr. Kipling's work.

OLIVE SCHREINER (born in Basutoland, 1864) leapt into sudden notoriety by writing, when still little more than a girl, the remarkable and somewhat unpleasant *Story of a South African Farm*. She has since published *Dreams* and other short tales, but none of them reach the level of her first work.

ENGLISH LITERATURE  
IN AMERICA.



# ENGLISH LITERATURE IN AMERICA.



## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

ALTHOUGH one is accustomed to think of American literature as the product of youth, it has in fact been in existence for nearly three hundred years. As Professor Carpenter points out, "The first books written here were contemporary with Shakespeare's plays; the first books printed here were contemporary with those of Milton; the first American-born authors were contemporary with Dryden and Defoe." On the other hand, this literature has been, if it is not still, "characteristic of a new nation." It has been in the main "citizen's literature," democratically intent on the common welfare, and little concerned with the niceties of æsthetics. Speaking roughly, it is sincere, vigorous, and direct; simple and racy; above all, resolute.

In the beginning, indeed, American writers had small pretensions to style or charm. The first settlers came from that class in England which cared less than any other for art; and Governor Berkeley's pride in the illiberal development of young Virginia is characteristic of his age:—

"I thank God there are no free schools nor printing, and I hope we shall not have these hundred years; for *learning* has brought disobedience and heresy and sects into the world, and *printing* has divulged them, and libels against the best government. God keep us from both!"



The first book printed in America was the celebrated but crude *Bay Psalm Book* (1640), and the most typical poet of Puritan New England is MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH (1631-1705), whose long-popular *Day of Doom* informs us of God's pity for "reprobate infants." Admitting them less sinful than those "who liv'd a longer time," he yet pronounces "every sin a crime":—

"A crime it is, therefore in bliss  
You may not hope to dwell;  
But unto you I shall allow  
The easiest room in Hell."

The *Journal* of WILLIAM BRADFORD (1590-1657) and EDWARD WINSLOW (1595-1655)—probably the first book written in New England—is more human and not wanting in graphic touches of description. Both authors are less severe than the most typical of the early Puritans. The somewhat tedious but historically valuable *History of New England*, by GOVERNOR JOHN WINTHROP (1588-1649) is another classic of a period in which the original REV. NATHANIEL WARD (1578?-1652) stands out among a long array of sturdy divines. The title of his whimsical diatribe on the confusion of politics and the worthlessness of women reveals the man:—

"*The Simple Cobbler of Agawam in America.* Willing to help mend his native country, lamentably tattered, both in the upper leather and sole, with all the honest stitches he can take. And as willing never to be paid for his work by the old English wonted pay. *It is his trade to patch all the year long, gratis.* Therefore I pray, gentlemen, keep back your purses. *By Theodore de la Guard.*"

It is not, indeed, until we reach a third generation of the famous MATHER family (treated more fully below), at the dawn of the eighteenth century, that the good pastors of New England resigned their supremacy over American literature.

For the time being, no doubt, their decline was accompanied by a decay in vitality among writers generally. New England herself had become, politic-

ally, less pre-eminent; the prosperity of Philadelphia was growing rapidly; population in the south now surpassed that of other sections. Everywhere race struggles for predominance and other social developments filled the horizon, and men had small leisure for bookmaking, although to this period belong the two great names of JONATHAN EDWARDS and BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, noticed below. Verse and prose, of course, were published during this period, but the only work which can demand to-day even passing notice is that which faithfully reflects the life of the time. ROBERT BEVERLEY'S *History and Present State of Virginia* (1705) has been well described as "a lively book about people who were very much alive;" while the *History of the Dividing Line run in the Year 1728*, and other manuscripts of COLONEL WILLIAM BYRD (not actually published till 1841), are both sprightly and informing. His views on intermarriage with Indians reveal more liberality of judgment than one would expect from so wealthy and elegant a planter:—

"For, after all that can be said, a sprightly lover is the most prevailing missionary that can be sent among these, or any other infidels. . . . Had such affinities been contracted in the beginning, how much bloodshed had been prevented, and how populous would the country have been, and, consequently, how considerable! Nor would the shade of skin have been any reproach at this day, for if a Moor may be washed white in three generations, surely an Indian might have been blanched in two."

A historian whose thorough scholarship shows considerable advance on that of his age was the REV. THOMAS PRINCE (1687–1758), who left behind him an admirable *Chronological History of New England*, and what is even more valuable, a collection of rare manuscripts and books on the same subject, still preserved in the Boston Public Library.

With the opening of the revolutionary period in 1765, the history of America grew steadily in importance before the eyes of the world; and though her activities were then mainly political and military,

the literary output of this period was by no means insignificant. Without question the most important political writer before the Independence was JOHN DICKINSON (1732-1808), who based his work on first-hand study of English law, acquired by three years' residence in the Middle Temple. His popular *Letters from a Pennsylvanian Farmer to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies* (1768) went far towards accustoming the public to the idea of resistance, while their shrewd reasoning secured "from both sides calm consideration for questions of grave import to the cause of human liberty." THOMAS PAINE (1737-1809), author of *The Rights of Man* (1790-92), had meanwhile entered America in 1774, and devoted his vigorous genius to the same cause. The pamphlet of 1776, entitled *Common Sense*, expressed the arguments for patriotism in language no reader can misunderstand; and *The Crisis* (running between 1776 and 1782) was no less courageous and provocative. In his eyes "every Tory is a coward, for servile, slavish, self-interested fear is the foundation of Toryism; and a man under such influence, though he may be cruel, never can be brave." America listened, and grew eager for action. THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743-1826), who drafted the famous "Declaration of Independence," had subtler genius and a more fascinating personality. Intense faith in the cause and the people gave him enormous influence over his contemporaries; and though he left no one book of great literary importance, the man himself will remain always the most fascinating and the most influential idealist in an age of which his intellect was far in advance. His *Notes on Virginia*, and similar volumes, are alive to-day.

In the same generation rose PHILIP FRENEAU (1752-1832), the first writer of American verse with any trace of talent. Freneau wrote negligible prose over the signature of "Robert Slender," and in poetry he never rose beyond that facility in the accepted English models of the eighteenth century which may be

found in his second volume of 1786, written at thirty-four. One finds, however, an unexpected sympathy for nature, besides vigorous satire, in most of his work, though such lyrics as *Wild Honeysuckle* (1788), *The Indian Burying Ground*, and *To a Honey Bee* show us the poet at his best. The Hudibrastic *McFingal* of JOHN TRUMBULL (1750-1831), however, was more popular than anything ever written by Freneau, and "is probably the most representative production of the Revolution, apart from the work of the publicists." His satire is not purely imitative, and appeals universally. Some of his couplets have been often quoted as Butler's. The spiritual *Journal* of JOHN WOOLMAN (1720-1772) has been immortalized by Lamb, and must be considered in further detail. J. HECTOR ST. JOHN DE CRÉVECŒUR'S *Letters of an American Farmer* (1782) reveal a sympathetic appreciation for the beauties of nature in which Woolman was completely lacking. Written to an imaginary friend in England, those fascinating letters are at once cultured and idyllic. Their author stands almost alone as precursor of a cult we are accustomed to regard as the exclusive gift of a later century.

It was in 1787 that the first American play was performed in public at New York by a company of professional actors. *The Contrast*, by ROYAL TYLER (1757-1826), is mainly built upon the affectations of foreign society as contrasted with homely Americanisms.

"Exalt each patriot heart ! this night is shown  
A piece, which we may fairly call our own ;  
Where the proud titles of ' My Lord ! Your Grace !'  
To humble Mr. and plain Sir give place."

Tyler was a well-read jurist. He wrote other comedies, a few spirited poems, and one of the earliest attempts in fiction to please American readers by a description of American life. His *The Algerine Captive* (1797), however, is modelled on Smollett, and does not escape the tediousness of primitive realism. The first pro-

professional man of letters in the States, CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN (1771-1810), published his *Alcuyn* in the same year. This novel contains a daring discussion of the consequences often attending the enforced permanency of marriage, which is so favourite a topic to-day; and its author pursued the making of romances with remarkable energy, besides editing two magazines and the half-yearly *American Register*. His *Wieland, or Transformation*, reveals strong imagination and original power in weird effects built on mystery.

So with NOAH WEBSTER, the lexicographer, and the grammarian, LINDLEY MURRAY (described below), we find ourselves closing what may be called the "preparatory" eras of American literature, in readiness for the masters. The output has been already vigorous and extensive, the authors talented and often original, but it is only with the dawn of the nineteenth century that we move among the truly great.

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### JONATHAN EDWARDS.

Born 1702 A.D. . . . . Died 1758 A.D.

Jonathan Edwards, extreme Calvinist as he was, inherited that strange "God-intoxication," or "inward sweet delight in God," which characterized the earliest divines of New England. As thinker and writer on his own subject he ranks alone of Americans among the giants, and his *The Freedom of the Will* (1754) has been described as "the sole fundamental contribution, outside the sphere of politics, which America has made to the world's thought."

Edwards was born at East Windsor, Connecticut, on October 5, 1702, and from his earliest years showed much concern about his soul, besides remarkable precocity in reading and writing. His wife, Sarah Pierrepont, he tells us, "hardly cares for anything except to meditate on God . . . to be ravisht with His

love and delight for ever ; ” while the young preacher himself sees “ in flowers, meadows, and gentle breezes of wind . . . only the emanation of the sweet benevolence of Jesus Christ. When we behold the fragrant rose and lily, we see His love and purity. . . . The easiness and naturalness of trees and vines are shadows of His beauty and loveliness. The crystal rivers and murmuring streams are the footsteps of His favour, grace, and beauty.”

Edwards’s twenty-three years’ ministry at Northampton belong to a period of great religious revival, and his magnetic eloquence became known over the land ; but times arrived when he proved over-strenuous for his parishioners, and the enforced resignation of 1750 gave posterity a profound theologian and metaphysician. His beautiful personal piety never deserted him in exile ; and when, just after his appointment as president of the new Princeton College, disease invited him to death, Jonathan Edwards was ready and willing.

He really believed that “ when the saints in heaven shall look upon the damned in hell, it will serve to give them a greater sense of their own happiness ; ” he saw the Spirit of God in the reputed conversion of a child aged four—strange as such ideas must seem to us to-day. But, like his great contemporary, Benjamin Franklin, Edwards *realized his thoughts* : hence his vital power. We read how “ once more he was overcome and burst into loud weeping, as he thought how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world, ordering all things according to His own pleasure.” Such faith lives alike by voice and pen. He has made the world aware of New England.

Besides the great metaphysical work already mentioned, Edwards published an important *Treatise Concerning the Religious Affections* (1746) and *A Treatise on Original Sin* (1758)—perhaps the most strictly logical exposition ever written of extreme Calvinism—while his more striking sermons were collected posthu-



mously in *A History of the Work of Redemption*, a volume which needs only culture to make it a literary masterpiece. The acute *Narrative of Surprising Conversions* (1736) and *Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England* (1742) reveal an earlier, more emotional Edwards in the throes of the great awakening.

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### BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Born 1706 A.D. . . . . Died 1790 A.D.

Benjamin Franklin, son of a tallow-chandler, is probably the most completely typical man who ever stood for an age and country. A true apostle of self-help, and rather amusingly optimistic, he was yet an enlightened public servant, who established "a fire company, a public library, an academy, a college, a postal system." His *Autobiography* is a classic.

He was born in Boston on January 17, 1706, and apprenticed to his brother, a printer. He read the English essayists of his century, wrote in their manner at the dawn of American journalism, and actually started the first American magazine in 1741—*The General Magazine and Historical Chronicle for All the British Plantations in America*. For thirty-four years he made the history of Philadelphia. In 1737 he became postmaster of that enterprising city, was several times chosen a commissioner to England, and was mainly instrumental in securing a repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act in 1766. After the Declaration of Independence he went to Europe, and secured the alliance of France, Spain, and Holland. In 1787 he presided over the Convention of Philadelphia which revised the Federal Confederation.

Though the very antithesis of his great contemporary, Jonathan Edwards, in his extreme common-sense and materialism, Franklin possessed the same great quality of *realizing his thoughts*, and thereby became also a

real force in the world. Indeed, his vivid curiosity and complacent humanitarianism is far more widely representative.

Nor has his reputation been achieved without true literary power. In his *Autobiography* most obviously, but without question everywhere, Franklin lives to-day as one of the world's few great self-revealers, whose personality rewards revelation. In that most consummate masterpiece of political and editorial craftsmanship, *Poor Richard's Almanac* (issued for twenty-five years from 1732), the man's rare shrewdness and wit stand further revealed—racy, of his native soil, fearless, independent, and yet dignified. He is before all things a citizen, intent, as were all writers of the colonial period, on “the greatest happiness of the greatest number.” For æsthetics and spiritual things he cares little or nothing; but as an honest man of the world he was complete, as a scientist he was ingenious and observant, as an economist and philosopher he was eminently practical, as a diplomatist—and in everything he undertook—he was successful.

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#### OTHER WRITERS.

RICHARD MATHER (1596-1669), his son INCREASE MATHER (1639-1723), and his grandson COTTON MATHER (1663-1728) were three famous pillars of Puritanism, of whom the last was at once the most extreme, the most pathetic, and the most esteemed. They represent the declining fortunes of that theocracy which once ruled New England in no unworthy sway. In the grandfather's time his own opinions were popular and almost universally accepted; his career, accordingly, was prosperous and successful. Increase, though a respected colonial agent and loyal diplomatist, lagged behind his generation, and was driven out of the presidency of Harvard by more liberal educators. But it was upon the great Cotton Mather himself that reform worked its full punishment, though, per-

versely enough, he was more extravagant than either in sacerdotalism, the ecstasies of pious vision, and pedantry. He stands before us to-day as the last monument of a vanished ideal, an almost forgotten tradition. He persecuted witches with what we should now call malignant cruelty, because he really believed them to be possessed with devils. He devoted his life and intellect to uphold "the Fathers" and revive their spirit among their degenerate descendants. He published over four hundred volumes, and left numerous manuscripts, one and all inspired by seventeenth-century pietism, written with the quaint garrulousness of that unfamiliar period. Yet he is always clear and spirited, sonorous and rhythmical. Of Mather's works we need only remember his *Parentator* (1724), a beautiful elegy on a persecuted father; his once popular *Bonefacius; or, Essays to do Good*, which taught Franklin "charity by system;" and the great Church history of New England, entitled *Magnalia Christi Americana*—a priceless record of religious story.

JOHN WOOLMAN (1720-1772), the Quaker, was born at Northampton, New Jersey, and during a varied career as farmer, clerk, and tailor, devoted his energies to home mission work and anti-slavery. Being finally moved to labour among the brethren in England, he died of smallpox at York. He lives to-day in the enthusiasm of Lamb and Whittier, through whose eloquent praise many a reader has turned to his *Journal* and found peace. Woolman, maybe, exaggerated the virtue of other-worldliness. His self-revelation lacks the charm derived from background, either of men or books. His character is noble, but morbid. Spiritual sincerity, however, must always elevate, and the little work stands out among its contemporaries, the faithful mirror of a good man.

GEORGE WASHINGTON (1732-1799) was, of course, primarily a statesman and a patriot, but his letters, proclamations, and addresses reveal character, and

in so doing become literature of the most elevated kind. The memorable *Farewell Address* and other similar documents, moreover, are dignified in their sonorous simplicity, and have some claim to style.

LINDLEY MURRAY (1745-1826) has attained to an unusual celebrity by the grammar he wrote and published at York in England (1795). His main ambition, apparently, was the production of a "purified edition of the British poets," fortunately not extant. It was bad health that checked his zeal, while evoking from a professor of chemistry the pious reflection, "Who would not rather be Mr. Murray, confined to his sofa, than Napoleon, the guilty possessor of a usurped crown and the sanguinary oppressor of Europe?"

NOAH WEBSTER (1758-1843), the famous lexicographer, was born in Connecticut, and stands out from the past as very typical of early Yankee shrewdness. He wrote quaintly on all subjects, from politics and pestilences to copyright and hygiene. Had one time to investigate his numerous productions, they would all prove readable, if provincial. About seventy million copies of his manual on spelling have been sold since its appearance; and, as every one is aware, his famous *American Dictionary of the English Language* still holds its own after countless revisions and expansions.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- ROGER WILLIAMS.—(1599-1683)—colonizer of Rhode Island—Baptist minister in Providence (1639)—opposed the Puritans—disputed publicly with George Fox—*The Bloody Tenet of Persecution*; *The Bloody Tenet yet more Bloody*, etc.
- JOHN ELIOT.—(1604-1690)—born in England and educated at Cambridge—went to Boston in 1631—*Christian Commonwealth*; *Massachusetts Indian Bible* (1661-1663).
- ANN BRADSTREET.—(1612-1672)—wife of Governor of Massachusetts—poetess—published first poetry in New England, 1647.
- SAMUEL SEWALL.—(1652-1730)—Chief Justice of Boston—*Diary* (1674-1729), first published in 1878-82.
- WILLIAM STITH.—(1689-1755)—President of William and Mary College—*History of the First Discovery and Settlement of Virginia* (1747).

- JOHN BARTRAM—(1701-1777)—traveller and botanist—description of *East Florida*—founded the first botanical garden in America.
- DAVID BRAINERD.—(1718-1747)—missionary to the American Indians—*Diary*, edited by Jonathan Edwards.
- JOHN WITHERSPOON.—(1722-1794)—a Scotsman—theologian; President of Princeton College—*Ecclesiastical Characteristics*.
- JONATHAN CARVER.—(1732-1780)—traveller—explored the interior of North America, and tried to reach the Pacific.
- JOHN LEDYARD.—(1751-1789)—traveller—visited Siberia; joined Captain Cook's third expedition; visited Africa. He died at Cairo.
- TIMOTHY DWIGHT.—(1752-1817)—Northampton, Massachusetts—Congregational minister, army chaplain, President of Yale College (1795-1817)—*History, Eloquence, and Poetry of the Bible; Theology Explained and Defended* (chief work); *Poems*.
- ALEXANDER HAMILTON.—(1757-1804)—West Indian island of Nevis—a lawyer and statesman of the Revolution—*The Federalist*, to which Madison and Jay also contributed.
- PETER FOLGER.—Benjamin Franklin's grandfather—poet—*A Looking-glass for the Times*.

## CHAPTER II

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

Born 1809 A.D. . . . . Died 1849 A.D.

THOUGH probably not even now so greatly admired in America as in England, Edgar Allan Poe has come into his inheritance of late years and is universally regarded as a classic.

In character, as in his work, Poe was conspicuously an alien among his contemporaries. He seldom associated literature with morals, and wherever we may distribute the responsibility, he was certainly not above reproach in private life. Of his parents, both actors and the mother an Englishwoman, he knew little, since they died before he was three years old; and the alternate spoiling and severity of his guardian, Mr. John Allan, tobacconist, was very ill-suited to one of his sensitive temperament. Though we have no direct evidence for attributing his weakness in character to inherited tendencies, it was undoubtedly born in him, and most consistently fostered by circumstances throughout his short and unhappy career.

His schooldays were divided between England—during a long visit of the family—and America; while at the University of Virginia he fell in with dissipated companions, and accumulated a somewhat formidable array of debts. In matters of conduct, Mr. Allan was evidently autocratic; and it does not seem to have occurred to him that by forcing his young charge to leave without satisfying his “debts of honour,” any social advantages he might have derived from his academic experience were irretrievably sacrificed. The indignant guardian then placed Poe in his own counting-house, from which he naturally ran away, and, like Coleridge, enlisted under an assumed name. Mr. Allan’s final attempt, after a formal reconciliation, to train the young poet for a regular military career, was, indeed, scarcely more judicious.

Poe soon tired of the life, and, no doubt deliberately, because other methods of escape were impossible, so far neglected his duties and flouted authority as to court dismissal. Further appeal to his guardian would have been undignified and unprofitable; and, after a short period of struggle in New York, Poe finally settled at Baltimore, with no other resources than his own energy and intellect could supply.

The future course of his personal life was mainly determined by his acquaintance with Mrs. Clemm, a widowed sister of his father’s, who became a very true mother to the now twice-orphaned youth. Though not an intellectual woman, she showed unfailing sympathy with his ambitions, and took entire charge of the home they shared both before and after his marriage with her beautiful daughter Virginia. When this took place, the bride was only fifteen and her husband twenty-seven, nor could any material advantages have been obtained on either side; but they were always absolutely devoted to each other, while Poe’s entire moral and mental collapse after losing her must be accounted the measure of her influence



In all probability he had acquired the taste for drinking before they met, but the habit of constant drinking never really mastered him till after her death.

From the beginning, however, his earnings were meagre and precarious. His writings were not obviously popular, while his conduct when under the influence of drink both ruined his chances of regular employment and alienated his best friends. Success

first came to him through a competition in a  
1833 local paper, *The Saturday Visitor*, from which

A.D. he won a prize of a hundred dollars for the

*M.S. Found in a Bottle*, and, what proved of more permanent value, the friendship and praise of experienced literary men. He now was sure, at least, of favourable introductions to editors of influence, and of judicious encouragement in his work.

As a professional journalist, indeed, he proved himself somewhat unexpectedly competent. His brilliant enterprise actually built up the reputation of several papers; while, though somewhat irresponsible and never conciliatory, he was both industrious and suggestive in practical affairs. He was known (and feared) as the most independent and acute critic of the day, long before his originality in prose or verse had been at all generally suspected. Though not always trustworthy in praise or blame, his attitude was far more sincere than that adopted by most of his contemporaries, and had, on the whole, a beneficial effect.

Many of the now popular tales first appeared in his own papers, and only attracted notice through his reputation for other work; though by 1840, when he was thirty-one, the twenty-five issued in two volumes as *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* were received with applause and not unnoticed outside America. Poe had already published three slim volumes of verse; but these had scarcely secured a reader, and it was not till five years later, on the appearance of *The Raven* in *The Mirror*, that he suddenly awoke to

find himself "a poet." His material, indeed, was ready, and before the year was out the volume on which his reputation is still founded was in the hands of the public.

Poe, however, was not destined to benefit by the recognition his genius had won from an unsympathetic generation. He had worked in passionate earnest and almost alone against calumny and opposition; when the clouds broke he was worn out by the struggle, and the death of his long-ailing wife, then only twenty-seven, made any permanent recovery impossible. Of the three years remaining to him few words are necessary. It may be reasonably doubted if Poe was in any full sense responsible for his actions, and their foolish extravagance merits no more than pity.

The fact that *Ulalume*, *Annabel Lee*, and *The Bells* were published and written during this dark era proves only that the fire of genius may for a time survive mental and bodily decay: the artist lives after the man. It was in October 1849 that he died in hospital.

Poe lives, undoubtedly, by the perfection of his metrical workmanship. He almost deliberately avoids thought, and expresses only one phase of emotion—a haunting melancholy. But his choice of words, his flow of rhythm, and his musical cadences are nearly flawless and, in many cases, very daring in their originality. As an artist in words he stands alone.

Though the appeal of his marvellous short stories is more popular, they are equally limited in power, and can never place him absolutely in the first rank. They are not great romances, and show small insight into human nature. But for a certain kind of short story, at once startling in imagination and compact of pure intellect, it would be difficult to name his match. Few writers, if any, have so skilfully combined fancy and mind without feeling—so powerfully dominated the reader without moving the heart or awakening the conscience.

## CHAPTER III.

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER.

Born 1789 A.D. .... Died 1851 A.D.

THOUGH Fenimore Cooper, novelist of the backwoods and of the sea, was not in any sense an artist, he had genius which will live.

With him birth and boyhood unquestionably set a seal on the characteristics which marked in a very striking manner his best work. The eleventh child of William Cooper was born at Burlington, New Jersey, on September 15, 1789; but, his father having just laid out the site of Cooperstown on Otsego Lake, he was carried to this frontier settlement when hardly more than a year old. Surrounded by forests in which wild beasts and Indians were still prevalent, he drank in the influences of untamed nature with all the impressionism of eager youth.

One is not surprised to learn that when, in 1802, the time came for a university career at Yale, he proved an intractable student, and was actually dismissed for his devotion to outdoor life. The incident, however, was not without its compensations, since in all probability he would not otherwise have gone to sea. Shipped as a sailor before the mast on a merchant vessel, he visited London and Gibraltar, becoming a midshipman in 1808. In that position he saw both lake and ocean service at home, but left the navy on his marriage in 1811.

It was an accident that afterwards transformed the country gentleman of Cooperstown into a novelist; for we are told that one day, reading a dull British novel, in a "pirate" edition, he announced with confidence that he could write better himself. His wife dared him to try, friends proved encouraging, and in 1819 *Precaution* appeared anonymously in New York.

The attempt was not, in fact, a conspicuous success,

and the author received encouragement to proceed through circumstances not directly associated with its merits. He was inspired, in fact, by strictly national ambition. *Precaution* was reprinted in England and credited to an English writer. Cooper's friends remembered the author of *Waverley*, and, most fortunately, urged him to serve *his own* country in similar fashion. The Revolution proved a topic at once obvious and irresistible; the character of Harvey Birch, created for all time, was quickly developed from a story of real life, and *The Spy* came into being (1821). Cooper himself was still dubious about the popularity of home topics with the colonists, and actually left the first volume standing in type for months before composing the second. Then he had the last chapter set up in page to insure his publisher against too great length.

Indeed, the work was not immediately successful; and even after its enthusiastic reception in England and France, Cooper wrote *The Pioneers* (1823), mainly to settle whether or not he had a real vocation for fiction. Once satisfied of this, and further convinced that frankly American books could hold their own, his course was clear.

It is to the influence of Scott, again, that we owe his next choice—that of a sea subject. Cooper declared that *The Pirate* must have been the work of a landsman, and, with pardonable dogmatism, at once set about proving that the knowledge and experience of a *real* sailor should make an interesting romance. *The Pilot* (1823) may certainly be quoted as his triumphant justification. Here, too, he gave life not only to sailors, but to ships and to the sea—an original and noteworthy achievement. Curiously enough, it has been said that his *The Two Admirals* (1842) may serve to prove his own theory against his practice, since it betrays ignorance concerning the handling of fleets; but his knowledge is strongly in evidence in *The Red Rover* (1831) and *Wing-and-Wing* (1842), a

thrilling narrative of ocean adventure. Again, *The Sea Lions* (1849) is a classical whaling story by virtue of its antarctic descriptions.

Before completing this series, however (in which we may forget others less worthy), Cooper had returned to the Revolution, and, after the false realism of *Lionel Lincoln*, established his reputation A.D. by issuing *The Last of the Mohicans* in 1826.

This is perhaps the greatest, as it is certainly the most popular, of all his works. The Indians here are more fully developed than Natty Bumppo of *The Spy*, but no less fascinating. Their creator, indeed, has been accused of idealizing the "noble savage," but it appears that anthropology has now silenced his critics, and that the fond memories of childhood may be accepted with confidence and respect. Cooper, in fact, despite his loose crudity of style and construction, found poetry in primeval man and nature. He could, moreover, "tell a story."

Yet it must be admitted with regret that success did not improve our once modest novelist, and that he produced an enormous bulk of work which must be consigned to oblivion. Being now enabled to visit Europe as a celebrity, he made occasion "to lecture both worlds on their shortcomings," after a dogmatic fashion acceptable to neither. Probably his long residence on the Continent brought him small advantage beyond the "genuine love for Italy and the Italians," so pleasantly conspicuous in *Wing-and-Wing*.

It must not, however, be supposed that all his later works were in any sense unworthy. Some of these have been named already, while *The Pathfinder* (1840)—praised by Balzac—and *The Deerslayer* (1841) show marked advance on *The Pioneers*, first of *The Leather Stocking Tales*; and *Satanstoe* (1845) lives to-day as a sympathetic picture of "colonial" New York.

He never found peace after his return from Europe, the latter part of his life being largely occupied in "the political quarrels of the Jacksonian epoch," and

in personally conducted lawsuits against libellous journalists. At this time, certainly, he was treated with outrageous animosity, and one can only rejoice that ill-feeling subsided so soon after his death on September 14, 1851.

The graceful appreciation delivered at a New York memorial meeting by William Cullen Bryant restored the balance, and has never been to any serious degree discounted.

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## CHAPTER IV.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

Born 1783 A.D. . . . . Died 1859 A.D.

"IRVING was the first ambassador whom the New World of letters sent to the Old." In these words Thackeray happily described the proud position of Washington Irving in English literature; for that literature is one, whether the works composing it are produced in England, in America, or in Australia. Irving's peculiar merit was that he was the first American writer who was recognized as worthy of a place among the great authors of English literature.

Washington Irving was born at New York on April 3, 1783. The war by which the American colonists had won their independence was just over, and General George Washington was hailed as the Father of his country. Many children born about that time received the name of the national hero, and the future author of *The Sketch Book* was one of those who bore it most worthily. Irving's father was a native of Orkney, and his mother was an Englishwoman from Falmouth. The father had at first gone to America in the service of the merchant navy, but he afterwards settled in New York as a merchant; and at the time of his son's birth he was at the head of a prosperous business.



Irving's regular education ended with the common school course, when he was sixteen years of age. Thereafter he educated himself, with the aid of books and men and nature. On leaving school he was sent to a lawyer's office, his father having resolved that he should follow the profession of the law. He found his greatest delight, however, in the well-stocked library at home. Without knowing or intending it, he was there preparing himself for his real calling in life. He ranged at will over the wide field of English literature, from Chaucer and Spenser to Addison and Goldsmith. On holidays he made excursions with his brothers and other friends up the river Hudson, or roamed through the woods which in those days made Manhattan Island still rural and picturesque. Thus he acquired that knowledge of the country and of its customs and local traditions of which he afterwards made such good use in his writings.

In his nineteenth year he began to write for a newspaper conducted by his brother Peter.\* Then his health broke down: he was threatened with disease of the lungs. His friends advised a visit to Europe, in the hope that the voyage and the change of climate and of scene would restore his health. He sailed in the end of 1803 or the beginning of 1804, landed at Bordeaux, and travelled through France and Italy as far as to Rome. There he met Washington Allston †—another of the first President's name-children—who was studying art. So fascinated was Irving with the art treasures of Italy and with the life of the studios that he had some thoughts of himself becoming an artist. That, however, was but a passing fancy.

His health being restored, he turned his face homeward. First of all, however, he visited England, taking Paris and Brussels on his way. This first visit

\* Over the signature "Jonathan Oldstyle."

† *Washington Allston*, painter and poet; author of *The Sylphs of the Seasons*. (1779-1843.)

to Europe formed an important part of Irving's education. It made the Old World a reality to him; it brought him into contact for the first time with English scenes and English minds; and it led him to view men and things through a new medium, and to see them in a new light.

On returning to America in 1806, he completed his studies in law, and was called to the Bar, but made no great effort to obtain business as a lawyer.

He preferred the writing of tales and sketches, 1806 and the excitement of literary ventures. His A.D. humorous powers were first shown in a periodical called *Salmagundi* (1807-8), produced with the help of his brother William and his friend J. K. Paulding.\* The paper was full of clever satire on the follies of the time, and was very successful.

Irving's next effort showed the possession of still higher powers, and brought its author wider fame. This was a burlesque *History of New York* (1809), professedly written by "Diedrich Knickerbocker," a Dutchman. New York was then a comparatively small place—its population did not exceed 50,000—and many of the people were descended from the original Dutch settlers, whose quaint manners and customs they retained. Of these Irving had been a close observer, and he described them with great zest and drollery in this book. He began it with the intention of casting ridicule on a pedantic history of New York in a local guide-book; but as the work went on the author's ideas expanded, and in the end he added to literature a new type of character.

Though Irving had not yet attained the finish and the polished style of his more mature works, the originality and power of his conception, as well as his quaintness, were universally recognized. One of the first to appreciate these qualities was Sir Walter Scott, who read "Knickerbocker's" *History* with de-

\* J. K. Paulding, author of several novels and satirical sketches and of a *Life of Washington*. (1779-1860.)

light, and who was by-and-by able to give the author the benefit of his appreciation.

During the next two years Irving conducted a magazine in Philadelphia, called *The Analectic*, contributing to it many papers and sketches, which afterwards appeared in his *Sketch Book* and in other volumes. In 1814, during the war with England, he acted for a short time as aide-de-camp to Governor Tompkins; and at the close of the war he again visited Europe for the benefit of his health (1815). He made a tour on the Continent, crossed to England, receiving a hearty welcome from Campbell, Scott, and Moore, and was soon introduced into the best literary society. From these charming recreations he was suddenly recalled to hard work.

On the death of his father, Irving had found himself in the comfortable position of being a sleeping partner in the mercantile house of which his brother was now the head. That house had suffered greatly through its Liverpool branch from the depression of trade caused by the long European war. After struggling hopelessly for many months, the firm became bankrupt, and Washington Irving was thrown 1818  
A.D. on his own resources. He resolved at once, and without much regret, to make literature his profession. For that his visit to England had completed his preparation; but the visit had another effect, which cannot be considered quite so satisfactory. The long period which he then spent in England, in close intercourse with English men of letters, led him away from the peculiar vein of humour and of character which he had developed in "*Knickerbocker's History*," and made him, in fact, an English author.

The first book he produced as a professional author was *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon*, in part a reproduction of magazine articles. Its issue in serial form began in New York in 1819. He tried to induce first Murray and then Constable to publish it in England; but both declined to do so. Then Scott ap-

pealed to Murray, told him of the genius revealed in "Knickerbocker's" *History*, and advised him to publish Irving's new book. Scott's influence prevailed, and Murray gave Irving £400 for the copyright of the work in England. It was at once successful, and the *Sketch Book* was recognized as an English classic.

Then followed *Bracebridge Hall* (1822), a delightful story, which takes rank with *The Sketch Book* as the most characteristic of his works. It is thoroughly English, however, both in its scenes and in its humour. He spent the next winter in Dresden, where he mixed freely in society, and spent a season in Paris. His *Tales of a Traveller* appeared in 1824.

He next settled for some time in Spain. In 1825, Mr. A. H. Everett, the United States Minister at Madrid, requested him to make translations of some recently discovered papers bearing on the history of Columbus. He accordingly went to Madrid; and the result of that visit, and of a second one in 1827, was his admirable *Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, published in 1828. That work was followed by another, on the *Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus* (1831). While in Spain he also collected materials for his *Conquest of Granada* (1829), *The Alhambra* (1832), *Legends of the Conquest of Spain* (1835), and *Mahomet and his Successors* (1850).

In the meantime, he had been appointed secretary to the American Legation in London—an appointment due entirely to his literary eminence. In 1829 the University of Oxford conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

On his return to America in 1832, after an absence of seventeen years, Irving was welcomed by his countrymen with great rejoicings. They were justly proud of him, and of the position he had taken among English men of letters.

His next works were American in their subjects. An excursion beyond the Mississippi furnished him with material for a work entitled *A Tour in the Western*

*Prairies* (1835). He then built for himself a pleasant home at "Sunnyside," on the Hudson, near his own "Sleepy Hollow." His next work was *Astoria* (1836), an account of the fur-trading settlement in Oregon, founded by his friend John Jacob Astor of New York. That was followed by *Adventures of Captain Bonneville* (1837), a story based on the unpublished memoirs of a veteran hunter; and by a volume of essays similar to those in *The Sketch Book*, and entitled *Chronicles of Wolfert's Roost* (1855).

In 1842 Irving went to Spain as American Minister, and spent four years at Madrid. During that time he rested from his literary labours. On his return to America, he expanded a forgotten essay into a *Life of Oliver Goldsmith*, which was published in 1849. His last work was the most elaborate though not the most successful of all his productions—a *Life of Washington*, (1855–1859), in five volumes.

Soon after its completion he died suddenly of heart disease at Sunnyside, November 28, 1859. He was never married, though in his youth engaged to Miss Matilda Hoffman, who died in her eighteenth year.

In respect of classic elegance of style, Irving was a follower of Addison; in respect of humour, his model was evidently Goldsmith, who was his favourite author. In lightness of touch and felicity of phrase, he has few equals among English authors. His biographical writings are masterly examples of that style of composition, so thoroughly did he understand the art of subordinating historical and incidental details to the main purpose of the narrative. He wrote no verse, but there is a great deal of true poetry in his writings; and his descriptions of natural scenery and of animal life show him to have been a close and accurate observer.

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## CHAPTER V.

WILLIAM HICKLING PRESCOTT.

Born 1796 A.D. . . . . Died 1859 A.D.

It is not, on reflection, surprising that historical subjects should attract American writers; and it so happens that the three great historians of that country are no less distinguished by literary style than by enthusiasm for the past.

The life of Prescott presents a record of moral heroism which ranks high among the romances of biography. Though born in comfortable circumstances at Salem, and given the full advantages of a university education, he early lost what would seem a first requisite to study—the use of his eyes—and remained practically a blind man till his death. For him, as to the glory of mankind it has been for others, the deprivation seems but to have acted as a stimulus, and all his energies were consistently devoted—almost without intermission—to scholarship and research.

There is, indeed, something slightly mechanical about the precision with which his work is marked off, as it were, into compartments, each subject having been thoroughly sifted and disposed of before the next was even approached. But neither his topics nor his treatment were marred by dull pedantry, and he is more read to-day for his romantic descriptions than for accuracy in facts or deductions. Prescott was both indefatigable and conscientious, and never suffered his personal difficulties to justify him in evading research. But in his day original documents were not accessible to the most painstaking of scholars; he happens to have chosen a period dependent on very misleading authorities; and his mind was not pre-eminently analytic.

Until 1837 Prescott devoted himself to the production of three masterly volumes on *Ferdinand and*



*Isabella*, followed in six years by his brilliant *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, naturally leading up to *The History of the Conquest of Peru* (1847). To the general reader he is best known by the two latter. The work is romantic, picturesque, and dignified, almost gorgeous, but never extravagant. His powers are essentially and consciously artistic, his treatment avowedly pictorial, and his subjects fascinating. True, "the imperial palaces which he saw in an imagination kindled by that of the easily-deceived Spanish conqueror have dwindled to large communal houses inhabited by barbarians; but fortunately, in his stately pages, they are enchanted palaces still."

After a short visit to Europe, the only holiday of his life, Prescott gave up his last years to the great *History of the Reign of Philip II.* (vols. i. and ii., 1855; vol. iii., 1858), but never completed the work, and in 1859 died from the effects of a paralytic stroke.

The only occasion of his diverting his attention from the studies to which his life was consecrated stands recorded in a volume of dignified scholarship, where he reprinted a few articles of miscellaneous criticism from the *North American Review*. He shows here sedate acumen and expresses himself with felicity, but we are never tempted to wish that the historian had turned critic.

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## CHAPTER VI.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

Born 1804 A.D. . . . . Died 1864 A.D.

To Hawthorne alone among American authors may we without hesitation apply the term "classic." By touches no less elusive for definition than they are unmistakable, his style possesses that assured grace and power which we find only in masters of literature. He has written one book which stands unchallenged

among the few elect, and his work bears always the stamp of inevitableness. It is, moreover, essentially permanent and universal, like an old master. Save for subject, it has no flavour of newness.

It must be remembered, however, that, though before all else an artist, he neither found himself in youth nor always gave us his best. We are content to think and speak only of those few priceless volumes which represent the real man, leaving the rest to oblivion.

A descendant of stern Puritan judges, farmers, and sea-captains, Hawthorne was born in Salem on July 4, 1804, and passed his boyhood in somewhat gloomy retirement. A year among the wilds of Maine, in all probability, did much to stimulate manliness and physique, without curbing his natural imaginativeness. Though educated at the provincial Bowdoin College, Brunswick, he was lucky enough to make such valuable friends there as Longfellow and Franklin Pierce, democrat and afterwards president, each in their own way, no doubt, stimulating to his dreamy and sensitive nature.

He never, apparently, contemplated any other than a literary career, but passed his youth in solitary, not misanthropic, contemplation, toiling on with slight encouragement from publishers or the public. After graduating in 1825, he buried himself in Salem for twelve years, writing and walking. The anonymous *Fanshawe* appeared in 1828, without attracting or meriting much attention, while two years later *The Token* accepted *The Gentle Boy* and other more characteristic short stories. He then found his way into such superior magazines as *The Knickerbocker*, compiled *Peter Parley's Universal History*, and issued the first series of *Twice-told Tales* in 1837.

His position was now assured among the discerning, and from seeking he became sought after. But literature had not yet proved to him a profitable asset, and it scarcely pleases one to reflect that, in order to secure some reasonable pros-

1837

A.D.

pect of marriage, he had to accept the office of weigher and gauger at the Boston custom-house in 1839. When deprived of his income by the overthrow of his party two years later, the young author went to Brook Farm, but soon found himself quite out of sympathy with transcendentalism.

Convinced, apparently, that prudence demanded no further delay, he married, in July 1842, the beautiful but somewhat delicate Miss Sophia Peabody, and settled down to happiness at the now immortal "Old Manse" in Concord. At all times Hawthorne's heart was shared, perhaps almost equally, by his home and his work; but he was not exactly unsociable, and now saw a good deal of Ellery Channing, Emerson, and Thoreau.

He contributed some exquisite stories to *The Democratic Review*, issued a second series of *Twice-told Tales*, and in 1846, returning to Salem, brought out that fascinating tribute to the first home of his married life, entitled *Mosses from an Old Manse*. The volume contains stories never afterwards excelled by him.

Meanwhile, his Democratic friends being in office again, he was appointed surveyor of the Salem custom-house, and entered upon the romance which "has been generally regarded as the greatest work of the imagination produced by any American." The unexpected loss of his appointment and the death of his mother made work difficult, but it remains against nature that the composition of *The Scarlet Letter* can ever have been a light task. The perfect little introductory record of his own official experience, recalling Lamb, prepares one for some hidden tragedy of a wasted life, and the tension is never relaxed. Indeed, the strength of the book arises from its marvellous artistic unity, its strict adherence to morality and justice. We read that a son of William Hawthorne, the first family settler, was "a grim judge of witches," and surely some portion of his spirit inspired the most gentle and most distinguished of his Puritan family

towards the creation of his great work. Nowhere else, indeed, does destiny so brood over every page, is every character so caught in the fatal meshes of his own sin. Roger Chillingworth, the executor of punishment, has a very proper touch of Satanic malignity in his composition, and the Ariel qualities of the child Pearl are almost painful in their dramatic effect.

Yet Hawthorne was in no sense a man of one book. *The Scarlet Letter* was published in 1850, and a year later he was ready with *The House of Seven Gables*—a work of mingled grace and power it were hard to match. The moral tragedy is here, perhaps, less acute but equally pathetic.

He next issued, also in 1851, *The Wonder Book* (continued in *Tanglewood Tales*, 1853), a charming and ever-fresh version of classical legends for children; and after collecting another volume of short stories (*The Snow Image and other Twice-told Tales*), set to work at Boston upon *The Blithedale Romance*. Here, for the first and last time, Hawthorne based fiction directly on personal experience, and the work owes its vitality to man's perennial interest in a unique social experience. The author, as we have seen, was not conspicuously sympathetic with the idealism of Brook Farm; but his memorial of that community has no rival, and the uninitiated still find pleasure in identifying his charming heroine Zenobia with Margaret Fuller.

The publication of his *Blithedale Romance* in 1852 was contemporaneous with the election of his friend Franklin Pierce to the presidency, by open loyalty to whom the novelist found himself temporarily involved in strictures from the more far-seeing opponents of slavery. But he received his reward in his appointment to the consulship at Liverpool, held for four years.

The experience thus given him of Europe was no less delightful in itself than instrumental in establishing his reputation. The independence and sympathy in his estimate of England (*Our Old Home*) has not

met with all the appreciation it merits; but of his last great novel, *The Marble Faun* (or *Transformation*), no two opinions have ever held vogue. This imaginative interpretation of Italy (more prosily recorded in the *French and Italian Note-Books*) is probably the most popular of all his works, and exhibits his whimsical genius in full bloom. Though not perhaps so great a book as either *The Scarlet Letter* or *The House of Seven Gables*, it is more obviously attractive and abounds in fascinating elusiveness.

Hawthorne returned to America in 1860, and wrote nothing more which is really significant. *Septimius Felton*, *Dr. Grimshawe's Secret*, and the unfinished *Dolliver Romance* show unmistakable signs of intellectual failure; and on May 19, 1864, he died, after a short illness, at Plymouth, New Hampshire.

He lives to-day as the author of four great romances and numberless perfect vignettes in fiction. Though maybe he was somewhat prone to moralizing and the use of allegory, his work is pre-eminently artistic in style and thought. He has thrown an imperishable glamour over the past of New England, re-peopled its buried townships with the children of his tender fancy, and ushered the world into the heart of his dreams.

## CHAPTER VII.

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY.

Born 1814 A.D. . . . . Died 1877 A.D.

THE great historian of liberty was born in Boston, inheriting literary tastes from his prosperous father, and from his mother some pride of birth. He is described as precocious and popular at school and at Harvard, though in all probability the final bent of his mind was determined by the lectures afterwards

attended at Berlin and Gottingen, where he became intimate with Bismarck—not, indeed, that he took up history at once, since we find him engaged, after marriage, in diplomacy, legislation, and novel-writing. Neither *Morton's Hope* (1839) nor *Merry Mount* (1849) proved a success, and Motley wisely abandoned the pursuit of fiction.

He was, we are told, about thirty-two—that is, in 1846—when his attention was first concentrated on that most romantic episode in European history with which his name must be always associated. Something like five years devoted to enthusiastic research apparently convinced him that the materials available in America were inadequate, and he accordingly decided upon a visit to the actual scenes of the mighty struggle to be commemorated. At Dresden, The Hague, and at Brussels he made what may almost be described as a fresh start, and, after another five years, was ready with a first part of the work.

Going to London that he might arrange for publication, he was unaccountably confronted by refusal, and brought out *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* (1856) at his own expense. A sale of seventeen thousand copies during the first year fully justified his courage, and the work further secured the unmeasured enthusiasm of historians on both sides of the Atlantic. Success only encouraged the indefatigable student to further exertion; and, chiefly on work at The Hague, he issued vols. i. and ii. of his great *History of the United Netherlands* in 1860, vols. iii. and iv. (carrying the narrative to 1609) in 1868.

The interval was in part accounted for by an eloquent defence of the Union and some political activity in Washington, besides “the mission to Austria” of 1861. He became English minister in 1869; but, being suddenly recalled, once more gave himself up to travel and writing. The last fruit of his labours came out in 1874, being entitled *The Life and Death of John of Barneveld*, a biography which was, in reality,



but the old history carried into more recent times. Though living another three years after its appearance, his health had broken up, and no more work was possible.

As the name of Motley was always associated with one topic, his work was consistently inspired by one generous enthusiasm. Being thus almost a special pleader, his style is naturally more distinguished for its eloquence than for its subtlety; his portraits, whether contemptible or heroic, are not quite free from exaggeration; and he is somewhat prejudiced against both Spain and the Calvinists. Motley, again, has not so fine a sense of construction as Prescott; he labours overmuch about minute detail; but the moral elevation of his work carries one on without pause. Once embarked in his narrative, no intelligent reader with any love for humanity can lay down the volume. Motley, moreover, is both thorough and brilliant; he has a dramatic command of language. His versatility extends to intrigue, spectacle, or incident; he rises with ease to the denunciation of villainy or the applause of heroism. History in his pages becomes living patriotism.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

Born 1803 A.D. . . . . Died 1882 A.D.

HOWEVER sure his title to eminence among American writers, there are few men of his time about whom more difference of opinion may be plausibly held and expressed than Emerson. To Matthew Arnold, in youth he seemed a seer, in old age not even "a great man of letters." No doubt, in part we may detect less substance in his work than did his disciples, because so much of his idealism has become our own heritage.

Yet in justice we should admire Emerson more, not less, because individual rights and duties are more fully realized—because democracy has grown fearless since he entered the world at Boston on May 25, 1803.

The son of a Unitarian clergyman of literary proclivities, and inheriting the best blood and training of New England, he was brought up thriftily but without privation. The constitutional delicacy which carried off two brothers promising literary brilliance may well have prevented his gaining distinction at school or college, and his youth is described as melancholy and subdued.

He was trained for the ministry, and for a short time actually served as pastor to the Second Church in Boston. This position he maintained through three years of marriage; but, soon after the death of his wife in 1832, he retired, and ultimately severed himself altogether from Christianity.

Circumstances thus combining to increase his natural melancholy and weaken his health, Emerson sailed for Europe; and, despite his pronounced Americanism, received impressions that permanently developed his character and work. Chief of these was his friendship with Carlyle, one of the most complete and satisfying communions between genius on record. He was himself a born preacher, and, through his radical individualism, found much stimulus in the Sage of Chelsea. For many of us to-day the two men still present an almost complete philosophy of life. They may be simultaneously accepted as true seer and prophet.

Returning to America in 1833, he settled in Concord, became a stimulating lecturer, and married very happily Miss Lilian Jackson. Directing his main attention to manners and morals, he captured the enthusiasm of American youth, and became the centre of a movement called Transcendentalism, of which Margaret Fuller and Thoreau were also leading exponents.

Yet for him practical experiments in simple communal life held no attraction. He remained a voice

crying, from comfortable domesticity, inspiring and suggestive, but isolated—a gentleman and a citizen.

Emerson, in fact, always considered himself a poet, and claimed a poet's right to go his own way. The early small volume, entitled *Nature* (1836), a rhapsody in transcendentalism, reaches the limits of imagination and word-music possible to prose; and the contemporary *Hymn* on the battle of Concord proves his mastery in verse technique. Meanwhile, his laborious editions of *Sartor Resartus* and Carlyle's *Miscellanies* witnessed to the loyalty of his friendship and secured much sympathy in England.

*The American Scholar* (an address delivered in 1837) has been accepted as "the New World's Declaration of Independence in respect to things of the mind," and his *Essays* of 1841 and 1844 established his reputation as an ethical teacher.

During a second visit to England, he delivered the well-known series of *Representative Men* (published in 1850), while the *English Traits* of 1856 records the sum of his shrewd and subtle, if not always reliable, personal impressions.

Although interested in politics to the extent of actually making a few campaign speeches, Emerson seems to have passed through the Civil War with a certain not unsympathetic aloofness similar to that accorded his old allies, the apostles of Brook Farm. Yet his influence on public thought is strikingly illustrated by the fact that the whole edition of his discursive and eminently peaceful *Conduct of Life* (1860) should have been sold in two days on the eve of the great national struggle. Like his *Essays*, the volume stands unique in its eloquent appeal for patriotic idealism, and belongs emphatically to the literature of freedom. Emerson, in fact, proved himself an effective supporter of anti-slavery, but he would never have joined a crusade.

When peace came, he issued a new collection of poetry. His *Society and Solitude* appeared in 1870,

and *Letters and Social Aims* in 1875. His last course at Harvard was published posthumously as *The Natural History of Intellect*, and the closing decade of an honoured career passed in quiet content.

Emerson the man must have been singularly attractive to all. As a writer, his persistent optimism was well balanced by insight. He saw into the elements of nature and humanity. Though not a master in poetry, in prose, or in philosophy, his was indeed a threefold greatness. He inspired conduct by precept and by example, he wrote and lived for an ideal.

The desultory nature of his philosophy is compensated by its moral loftiness; a certain looseness of style, caught on the lecture platform, cannot obscure his perfect diction and distinguished eloquence; his diffuseness, occasional obscurity, and metrical faultiness yet leaves a poet-seer inspired by courage, subtlety, and tenderness. As he would have taught men, we may learn from him; as he strove to live, we honour him.

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## CHAPTER IX.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

Born 1807 A.D. . . . . Died 1882 A.D.

HARDLY any other English poet has appealed more powerfully than Longfellow to the homely affections or to the tenderest and simplest feelings of human nature. His poetry, it has been said, "is a gospel of goodwill set to music. It has carried 'sweetness and light' to thousands of homes. It is blended with our holiest affections and our immortal hopes."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born at Portland, Maine, on February 27, 1807. His father was Stephen Longfellow, a lawyer and a Congressman. His mother was Zilpha Wadsworth, a descendant of John Alden,

and of "Priscilla,\* the Puritan Maiden." His boyhood was spent chiefly in and about his native town. For its quiet life and its lovely surroundings his strong affection continued all through life. His memories of

"The beautiful town  
That is seated by the sea"

are embalmed in his touching poem, *My Lost Youth*, published in his fifty-first year.

At the early age of fourteen, Longfellow entered Bowdoin College, at Brunswick, twenty-five miles from Portland, where one of his class-fellows was Nathaniel Hawthorne. Here he discovered his poetical bent in several short poems contributed to *The United States Literary Gazette*. After graduating, with honours, in 1825, at the age of eighteen, he remained for a short time at Bowdoin as tutor. He then spent a short time in his father's office, with the idea of becoming a lawyer; but he did not take kindly to the work, for which, indeed, he had no natural aptitude. Fortunately for himself, and for English literature, he was offered and he accepted, though only nineteen years of age, the professorship of modern languages at Bowdoin.

After his appointment, he received the customary leave of absence, that he might travel in Europe and perfect himself in European languages. The three and a half years that he spent in France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Holland, and England, had a powerful effect on the growth and development of his mind. As in the case of Washington Irving, his contact with the Old World widened his sympathies, and changed his manner of contemplating both nature and human nature. At the same time, it prevented him, as it prevented Irving, from being a purely American author, and it fitted him for taking his place among the exponents of English thought and English feeling.

\* *John Alden*....*Priscilla*, the hero and the heroine of Longfellow's poem *The Courtship of Miles Standish*.

It is remarkable that he should thus have fallen, like Irving, in the plastic time of youth, under the influence of Old-World conceptions and scenes.

With this equipment for his life work, Longfellow returned to America in 1829, and at once entered on his professorial duties with enthusiasm and 1829 with confidence in his powers. That high ex- A.D. pectations were formed of his labours may be inferred from the fact that, in 1828, Bowdoin College conferred on him the degree of LL.D. In 1831 he married Mary S. Potter.

His first literary work, after he entered on his college duties, consisted of translations, chiefly from the Spanish. He also wrote articles in *The North American Review*; and published notes of travel, written in a highly poetical vein, under the title *Outre-Mer* (beyond the sea)—1835.

In December 1834 he was selected to succeed George Ticknor as Professor of Modern Languages and of *Belles-Lettres* in the University of Harvard, the foremost seat of learning in America. The position involved another period of European travel, extending to fifteen months. In the midst of it a great sorrow cast its shadow on his young life in the death of his wife at Rotterdam.

On his return to America he continued his contributions to *The North American Review*, and he published his romance of *Hyperion*—a work glowing with poetic feeling. In the same year (1839) he gave to the world his first volume of poems, under the title *Voices of the Night*. It contained *The Psalm of Life*, *The Reaper and the Flowers*, *The Beleaguered City*, and other poems, which at once became popular and marked him out as a poet of the first rank. The issue of another volume of *Ballads and other Poems* two years later established his fame, including, as it did, *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, *Excelsior*, and *The Village Blacksmith*.

Longfellow paid a third visit to Europe in 1842, which is chiefly memorable on account of the *Poems*



on *Slavery*, which he wrote on board ship during the homeward voyage. Not long after his return to America, he married his second wife, Frances Elizabeth Appleton. Then, also, he settled in his house at Cambridge, Massachusetts, which Americans regard with feelings of reverence.

For the rest, his life was destitute of active interest. Its story consists of little more than a record of his works. For the next eleven years he continued to discharge faithfully and acceptably the duties of his professorship at Harvard. He wrote a drama of Spanish gipsy life, *The Spanish Student* (1843); he edited *The Poets and Poetry of Europe* (1845); he published a volume of poems under the general title of *The Belfry of Bruges* (1846); he wrote *Evangeline, a Tale of Acadia* (1847), the greatest of his poems, and perhaps the most successful attempt ever made to adapt the classic hexameter to English verse. He wrote *Kavanagh* (1849), a second prose romance; *The Seaside and the Fireside* (1850), another volume of verse; and *The Golden Legend*, a mystery play—the last named in 1851.

In 1854 he resigned his professorship at Harvard, and was succeeded by Lowell. A year later he published the quaint "Indian Edda" or epic, *Hiawatha*; and it was followed by *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858), written, like *Evangeline*, in English hexameters, and by *Birds of Passage*, including *My Lost Youth*, a retrospect of his early life. In 1859 the University of Harvard conferred on him the degree of LL.D.

In 1861, he had to encounter the second overwhelming sorrow of his life, in the tragic death of his 1861 wife, who was burned in his house at Cambridge. The event chastened his spirit, but did not extinguish his poetic power. In work he found refuge from his sorrow, and by-and-by he gave the world the first part of his *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863) and his translation of the *Divine Comedy* of Dante (1867-70). In 1868 he received from Cambridge



Henry W. Longfellow



(England) the degree of LL.D.; and in the following year he visited England again, and was made a D.C.L. of Oxford.

The most important of the works produced during the last twelve years of the poet's life were *The Divine Tragedy* (1871), *Aftermath* (1873), and *Hermes Trismegistus* (1882), his last poem. He died at his home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on March 24, 1882.

"We might conceive," writes Mr. Underwood, "of a Longfellow Gallery, better known and more fondly cherished than the picture galleries of kings. There, in the place of honour, hangs EVANGELINE, sweetest of rustic heroines, turning her sad face away from the desolate Grand-Pré. Opposite is the Puritan damsel PRISCILLA, with her bashful clerical lover, and the fiery little captain. In the next panel is the half-frozen sound over which skims the bold NORSEMAN. There, under the chestnut-tree, stands the swart BLACKSMITH, all the love of a father brimming in his eyes. There leans the vast glacier, gleaming in fatal beauty, along whose verge toils upwards the YOUTH with *Excelsior!* on his banner.

"Here is pictured the BELFRY OF BRUGES, and the groups of people listening to the heavenly chime of its bells. There, shivering in a wintry sea, is the HESPERUS, a helpless wreck, driving upon Norman's Woe. Yonder stands ALBERT DÜRER, in a street of his beloved, quaint old Nuremberg. There, on the sculptured stairway, is the CLOCK, ticking its eternal *For ever! never! Never! for ever!* Yonder looms up STRASBURG spire, while spirits of the air circle round its pinnacles, and the miracle play goes on below. That is PAUL REVERE, galloping in the gray of the morning along the road to Concord. In that green spot, with the limitless prairie beyond, stands HIAWATHA, looking gloomily westward, whither his path leads him. Lastly, we see a broad frame on which we read in golden letters the legend, *The Divine Tragedy*. Let us not lightly raise the veil."

## CHAPTER X.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

Born 1819 A.D. . . . . Died 1891 A.D.

IN one respect, at least, Lowell stands, and will probably stand for ever, as the most typical of American poets—at least for English readers. It is he, and so far he alone, who has enshrined in literature—itsself inspired by the most noble patriotism—the “best Yankee dialect up to that time written down for the delectation of mankind,” and “a Yankee parson worthy of the family of Adams and Primrose.” We do not to-day exclusively associate America with the irrepressible Yankee, but the type remains, and Lowell is its laureate. The two series of *The Biglow Papers* (covering the Mexican War and that of the North and South) contain some nearly supreme achievements in dialect poetry, as they are certainly distinguished alike by the gayest humour and the most patriotic instinct.

Their shrewdness and common sense, indeed, must have caused much wonderment to those familiar with the poet's somewhat visionary youth. Born at Cambridge, Massachusetts, on February 22, 1819, Lowell began life in a circle where provincial sentimentalism, tempered by love of the best English classics, held its sway; and it may not, perhaps, be claimed that his best work outside *The Biglow Papers* is quite free from the flavour of the library, the over-ornament of a self-conscious culture. His father, the Rev. Charles Lowell, was something of an author; an elder brother and sister published fiction and verse; he married a poetess. A friend of Longfellow and Whittier, he knew something of Emerson at Concord.

Of a life so exclusively devoted to study and writing it is not possible to speak at great length. For though Lowell was called to the Bar, he never practised;

and though literary success in his day did not spell riches, he appears to have been always content with the narrow income derived from his pen. This, of course, did not depend exclusively on poetry. He was a professional journalist of unusual ability, and his criticism ranks high.

Personally, indeed, he experienced a combination of congenial happiness, clouded by sorrow, neither above nor below the average. Married in 1844, he lost his wife six years later, and his first child died in infancy. On the other hand, means of travel were not denied him, and he took his family to Rome and England, afterwards visiting Spain, and again the mother country, on diplomatic missions, in the manner of American men of letters. Such experience, no doubt, deepened his love for Old-World literature, widened his culture, and bore fruit in several pleasant volumes of reminiscence.

At home, Lowell became a popular lecturer, and was soon appointed professor at Harvard in succession to Longfellow. Though always regarding literature as a means to culture, he now made himself an excellent general scholar, and entered with zeal upon linguistic studies, especially the older Romance. In 1857 he married again, and became editor of *The Atlantic Monthly* for four years. Though always a careful and original journalist, he himself esteemed but few of his *Atlantic* articles worthy of reissue in volume form.

During the Civil War, again, he naturally did little work outside the political writing for which he was so well equipped. Though the second *Biglow Papers* are, as a whole, not equal in power or humour to the first (despite the greater moment of their inspiration), we may find among them such almost perfect examples of his peculiar gifts as *Sunthin in the Pastoral Line* and *The Courtin'*, while his *Three Memorial Poems* speak perhaps the most eloquent language of national idealism to be found in our tongue.

During the war period, Lowell also edited, with



Charles Eliot Norton, *The North American Review*, and rather later (1869) he collected the poetry of twenty years in his delightful *Under the Willows*. His final volume of twenty years later, *Heartsease and Rue*, reveals the same impressionable talent, though here the "influences" are more unmistakably modern.

As an older man, Lowell, indeed, was better known as an essayist and critic than a poet. *Among My Books* (1870 and 1876) and *My Study Windows* (1871) prove him to have been a great, if not among Americans the greatest, man of letters in his generation. As English Ambassador from 1880 to 1885 he has been happily described as "the spokesman of American culture to a people who were not very sure that America could export that article." Despite his fondness for the most revered classics of our tongue, Lowell was proud of his own countrymen's best literary work, and never afraid to express his partialities with a frank wit very attractive to English audiences.

It was just before the end of his time in the mother country that he lost his second wife, and six years later the end came to him peaceably among his books at Elmwood, not long after his seventieth birthday—August 12, 1891.

Neither as poet nor critic does Lowell rank quite with the highest. In the one case, he lacks spontaneous passion or perfection of form; in the other, unerring judgment, precision, or scientific method. Yet his appreciations are masterly, felicitous, and stimulating; his verse is subtly imaginative, musical, and refined. He never, perhaps, spoke with quite fresh authority to his generation; but when, as in poetry inspired by love of country, he shook off the limitations of his library manner, his muse was glowing and noble and strong.

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## CHAPTER XI.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

Born 1807 A.D. . . . . Died 1892 A.D.

THOUGH not among the great artists of literature, John Greenleaf Whittier lives to-day, by his intimate association with the anti-slavery movement, as a true singer of liberty.

Born at East Havershill, Massachusetts, he came of an old Quaker family, who, unlike so many of that persuasion, had never accumulated wealth; and his father was a small farmer, under whose care he received little education and had not even a chance of much reading. However, he was inevitably familiar with the Bible; the journals of early Friends are good literature; and we are told that Burns was a household word in the family. Rather later, the young Whittier read Shakespeare and Scott. Here, indeed, were foundations enough for any lover of poetry.

Whittier may well have sung at the plough, and there is, perhaps, no great occasion for wonder that verses, sent in secret by an admiring sister to a neighbouring newspaper, thus found their way into print. The editor, William Lloyd Garrison, himself sought out his young contributor, then at work in the fields, and insisted upon another year's schooling, which was actually managed. At twenty-one we find Whittier himself provided with editorial employment in Boston. Thrift and industry enabled the young poet to pay off a mortgage for his father, at whose death he took over the family farm, apparently without giving up journalism. He had been meanwhile making at least some local reputation, and his interest in politics first awoke at this date.

The strain of double responsibility, however, proved too great for a constitution probably weakened by early hardships; and from 1832 he lived quietly at

home with his mother and sister, gradually becoming more absorbed in national affairs, and directly serving the party organization of the abolitionists. It was the influence of Garrison that mainly determined his ultimate line of campaign. As editor of *The Pennsylvania Freeman* (1838-39) he gained some personal experience of mob hostility and persecution.

It does not appear that Whittier ever took himself very seriously as an artist, and his own references to his long verse tale of King Philip's war, *Mogg Megone* (1836), may be accepted as perfectly just. It did little more, he wrote, than suggest "the idea of a big Indian in his war-paint strutting about in Sir Walter Scott's plaid."

The anti-slavery poems of this period strike a far higher note, and their almost immediate popularity among those supporting the movement brought him the doubtful compliment of a volume collected without his knowledge, issued in 1838, and again in 1839. Of these, perhaps *Expostulation* was the finest.

His own *Lays of My Home* (1843) secured a little much-needed pecuniary return; but it was only the great success of *Snow-Bound* (1866) that gave him permanent relief from anxiety. Meanwhile, the foundation, in 1847, of *The National Era* (afterwards famous as containing the first issue of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) brought him regular work, and an opportunity of freely expressing himself "until the eve of that civil war which he had helped to make inevitable."

The famous *Barbara Frietchie* and other war lyrics evinced his loyalty to the cause of the North, for whom he remained no silent prophet of liberty and union, though without renouncing his Quaker principles. It was just before the war closed that he lost his accomplished sister, the beloved companion of a lifetime, so gracefully remembered in *Snow-Bound*; and the twenty-eight years remaining to him were spent in quiet, honourable retirement, not in discontent or idleness. When peace came, he was among the first to lay

aside uncharitable impulses and smooth discord. The courageous fighter, indeed, was at all times tender-hearted, and it is peculiarly fitting that his last verses should have been a tribute to his famous countryman, Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Whittier lives to-day as a genuine lover of nature and a true patriot. The ringing stanzas of his best anti-slavery poems must always stir the pulses of mankind, as they hold our memory. In his simple ballads, again, we find living pictures of the early New England which Hawthorne has taught us to love and revere. But perhaps his greatest artistic achievement is the beautiful descriptive *Snow-Bound*, already mentioned, which has been often compared, not inaptly, with *The Cottar's Saturday Night* of Burns. Here the poet revives for us his own early days of not uncheerful farm labour, with all the power of genuine sincerity. Seldom has rural life, with all its hardships and its compensations, been drawn more faithfully or with more of the true idyllic tone, while the tenderness of his tributes to dead kinsfolk are unsurpassed.

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## CHAPTER XII.

WALT WHITMAN.

Born 1819 A.D. . . . . Died 1892 A.D.

THERE are many respects, both obvious and subtle, in which Whitman may be regarded as more typically American than any other writer; and as, from a European standard, the States may still be thought a nation "in the making," so is their poet not wholly made.

To represent or speak for the people of America was undoubtedly his conscious ambition. In so doing, he remains "new" and bafflingly complex, loud-voiced and assertive, egotistical, incoherent, startlingly frank.

He has all the free spaciousness and elemental passion of an unformed continent. He had no desire, could he have done so, to stoop and cultivate the masses; rather he raised them, clamouring, well over the fences of exclusiveness. He gave them a voice, and the world is listening.

Walter (commonly called Walt) Whitman was born, of New England and Dutch ancestry, at West Hills, Huntingdon township, Long Island. Being the son of a carpenter, he was naturally educated at a village school, and apprenticed to a printer before he was fourteen. After a little schoolmastering he took up journalism, and at twenty was editing a paper of his own in his native town.

But it was during his subsequent twelve years' experience as a compositor and a journalist in New York that Whitman acquired the experience which gave individuality to his work. He read many novels, studied the Bible, Shakespeare, and *The Arabian Nights*, but gave most of his thoughts to the observation of mankind. Sharing in no idle or half-hearted spirit the actual toil of a hustling business community, he sought deliberately the friendship of workers everywhere, that he might learn to know and love them as no other man of letters has ever done. Already wearing in imagination the prophet's mantle, he spared no pains in gathering knowledge or emotion that might give life to his evangel.

In 1848 he visited New Orleans and the North-West, gathering more material, varied and yet similar, and later widened his practical knowledge of affairs by a course of house-building. The need for permanent self-expression apparently took shape when he was well over thirty. Though believing in the world's supreme need of a "new" literature, he had absorbed little from the old, and always distrusted contemporary culture. Save that he, too, held America destined to regenerate the world, Whitman exhibits no quality characterizing the writers of his own age and country.

It is not surprising that his first volume, partly printed by his own hands, obtained only abuse from critics and indifference from the public. Whitman, of course, was not the man to be discouraged by either, while Emerson and Thoreau both encouraged his determination "to go on with *his* poetic enterprise in *his* own way, and finish it as well as *he* could." The twelve poems, composing the first issue of his now famous *Leaves of Grass* (1855), and the thirty-two included in a second edition (1856)—again enlarged in 1860—were certainly not calculated to conciliate those accustomed to sit in judgment on new books. The poet offended nearly all the canons of accepted taste, without a thought of apology or explanation.

He handled forbidden topics with startling frankness, sung of universal optimism as though sects were not, and broke every known metrical convention. One may suspect, indeed, that the critics found it much more difficult to forgive his uncouth diction, his trick of cataloguing, and his unmanageable rhythms, than even his daring egotism of thought. That, they were content to misunderstand.

As we have seen, Whitman doggedly pursued his own way, ready to work for his living like any other, but from time to time repeating his message—somewhat enlarged and developed—retracting nothing. Then came the war, and with it—one might almost say by accident—an occasion for living out that profound and passionately tender humanity now recognized as the fundamental basis of his work. In December 1862, Whitman's brother was seriously wounded, and he himself immediately set about nursing, in hospitals or on the battlefield. In all probability no other experience could have more fully brought out the man's innate charm and strength; none, at least, could have evoked finer poetic expression. Years afterwards, in parts of his *Specimen Days and Collect* and in the posthumous volume of letters to his mother, entitled *The Wound-*



*Dresser*, Whitman revealed himself, and won a place in the heart of mankind which he can never lose.

It is, perhaps, not altogether easy to forgive the Secretary of the Interior who, finding *Leaves of Grass* in the poet's desk, dismissed him from a clerkship in that department; but, on the other hand, one may gladly remember that the Attorney-General, Mr. James Speed, promptly gave him a better post. However, officialism, whether kind or hostile, never yet moulded so resolute a personality; and when, in 1866, he issued the stirring volume of war poems entitled *Drum-Taps*, their manly patriotism and comparative normality of form secured a wide circle of admirers. The noble elegy on Lincoln, though not so popular as his *O Captain, My Captain*, found ready sympathy among his countrymen, and for it much was forgiven.

Whitman, though now recognized as a poetic force, went on quietly with his work as a clerk at Washington, and issued two new editions of the *Leaves* (1867 and 1871), until his iron constitution gave way 1873 to an attack of paralysis, and at fifty-four he A.D. found himself confronted with actual poverty.

From the autobiographical *Specimen Days and Collect* we learn how simply and courageously he turned to nature for comfort, how loyally he hoped on for mankind.

Indeed, during his last twenty years, though frequently reissuing the *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman unconsciously pacified criticism by revealing a broader and more temperate outlook on life. The two series of highly-wrought *Democratic Vistas* (1871), and, as already noticed, the *Specimen Days and Collect* (1882-83), aroused sympathetic appreciation in many hostile to the most marked eccentricities of the *Leaves*. With the appearance of *November Boughs*, in 1888, he felt justified in preparing a complete edition of his *Works* (revised and enlarged in 1892), and afterwards collected the verses styled *Sands at Seventy*. In 1891 came the *Second Annex, Good-bye, My Fancy*, with the tenth

and final edition of *Leaves of Grass*. A year later, on March 26, he died.

Whitman is now universally accepted as a great and original poet. We may not look to him for an ordered philosophy of life; we need not uphold or imitate his drastic revolt in style; but he, being the man he was, could have spoken in no other way, and his was a message of freedom. We are told that—in some cases, at least—he actually cut out any normally poetic phrases from the first drafts of his own manuscripts; and the noble music of such true lyrics as *O Captain, My Captain*, no less than the apocalyptic grandeur of his best prose, may certainly prove him fully alive to the music of words—tempting a wish that he were more often spontaneous.

Yet much remains to stir the pulses of any kindred spirit. In painting the horrors of warfare, his words vibrate with passionate humanity; his tributes to summer and sea and stars achieve sublimity in prose; he honoured men no less than mankind. Whitman, it is true, appeals to the emotions rather than to the intellect, his eyes are physical, not spiritual; he believes in the individual, himself. But his message is strong, clean, and bracing. Despite his chaotic and deliberate formlessness of style, he was not unconscious of artistic effect. His later work is, in fact, more restrained, and throughout we see always which is poetry and which prose. In fact, he deliberately adopted the one form or the other best suited to the expression of any particular thought, and understood the power of both.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

FRANCIS PARKMAN.

Born 1823 A.D. . . . . Died 1893 A.D.

THERE can be no question that Parkman is the greatest American historian who has devoted himself ex-

clusively to national topics, whatever may be ultimately established concerning the value of his work in relation to Prescott's or Motley's. He had also an advantage over them by the use of more modern methods in research.

He, too, was born in Boston, and graduated at Harvard. Like Prescott, he worked throughout life under physical disadvantages, though his delicacy as a boy brought him constantly in touch with nature, and an adventurous tour of western exploration (undertaken at twenty-four) perhaps determined his life-work, while undermining his constitution.

Indeed, the record of his experience, entitled *The Oregon Trail* (1849), gives us abundant promise of the style and breadth destined to characterize the masterly eleven volumes in which he afterwards "made" American history, from the discovery of Columbus to the Revolution. The fact of his having actually visited the West, before the completion of its transference from nature to civilization, lends vividness to his copious records of New-World romance.

Parkman, of course, did not depend exclusively on his own experience or observation. Though seldom able to "read or write more than a few minutes at a time," he was fortunately able to pay for original documents being copied and afterwards read aloud to him. He spared no pains in a pursuit of details, not surpassed by Motley; studied every scene and every actor for himself; and personally explored the archives of Europe for illustration of his subject. The Franco-British struggle for supremacy in the New World reveals a picturesque humanity; its outcome must be of supreme interest to every patriotic American. Pride of birth and race, assuredly, long survived with the rough hardihood engendered among the earliest settlers; warfare, often conducted by exploration, had in it all the elements of heroic adventure; the Red Indian was a no less dramatic figure than the motley crowd of enthusiastic missionaries, hard-headed men of busi-

ness or statecraft, and European "failures"—all variously intent upon the acquisition and the development of his native wilds.

Though not, perhaps, so supreme an artist as Prescott, Parkman showed no less mastery in the analysis and arrangement of his material than in collecting it. He makes history as fascinating as a novel, while seldom neglecting the requirements of true scholarship. From a literary point of view his style developed considerably with practice, and only the later volumes exhibit its varied charm and power in their perfection. Parkman, at one time Professor of Horticulture at Harvard, also wrote a fascinating little book on roses, and a somewhat sensational novel called *Vassal Morton* (1856).

The historical series began in 1851 with two volumes (*The Conspiracy of Pontiac*) on the Indian revolt following the fall of Quebec. *Pioneers of France in the New World* came fourteen years later, followed, at comparatively short intervals, by *The Jesuits in North America* (1867), *La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West* (1869), and *The Old Régime in Canada* (1874). As some readers claim most charm for the description of Indian tribes from the immature *Conspiracy of Pontiac*, more technical critics find most philosophy in his *Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV.* (1877), while none can question the analytical brilliance of *Montcalm and Wolfe* (1884). His last work was *A Half-Century of Conflict*, which appeared in 1892, about a year before his death.

Beginning at twenty-eight, Parkman continued his work till he was nearly seventy; and, during that fruitful period, produced a unique record of national history.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

Born 1809 A.D. .... Died 1894 A.D.

It is curious to reflect that the gayest and most genial of American writers should have sprung from a line of stern Calvinists, so merrily victimized in his own *One Hoss Shay*.

Yet concerning the ancestors of Wendell Holmes, more fully pictured by him in the first chapter of *Elsie Venner*, there can be no hesitation in judgment. It would seem that from them he inherited nothing save a shrewd understanding of their characteristics. Born at Cambridge on August 29, 1809, the son of an excellent divine, our author was nourished in an academic atmosphere, and may be said to have begun and ended his life under the shadow of Harvard. He stands for all time as the laureate of college culture ; his prose beckons us from a study window.

Holmes, in fact, found his vein from the beginning, since even the effusions of undergraduate days show talent for society verse and broad humour, while the two papers of 1831 and 1832, entitled *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, foreshadow in more than name that charming volume of gossiping philosophy in which he reached the summit of his reputation.

He did not, however, enter immediately upon the profession of literature ; but, after studying medicine at home, he pursued the subject in Paris from 1833 to 1835. For eleven years he practised in Boston, and was then elected Professor of Anatomy and Physiology at his own university, being already a married man. As lecturer he remained active and popular from 1847 to 1882.

His work in medicine, both scientific and popular, was always distinguished ; and the experience afforded by such training had a strong influence, not altogether

fortunate, on his fiction, while it undoubtedly broadened his outlook on human nature.

Meanwhile, in literature he developed slowly, though much in request for verses on all occasions of conviviality. The comparatively slight promise in his collected volume of 1847 was no doubt due in part to his fondness for the heroic couplet, which was also the metre of *Astrea* (1850).

It was not, in fact, till he was nearly fifty that circumstances, quite outside his own sphere of influence, brought him at once a channel for expression and an appreciative public. The apostles of Transcendentalism and of anti-slavery had given 1857 way to new social and political forces. *The A.D. Atlantic Monthly*, with Lowell for its first editor, became at once the accredited organ of the new literature, and Dr. Holmes was an early contributor.

The *Autocrat* had now been silent for twenty-five years. It was surely his good angel which prompted his creator to breathe new life into a forgotten favourite, and out of a matured imagination to give us the finished product so familiar on both sides of the Atlantic. The volume so called was ready a few months later; and when *The Professor at the Breakfast-Table* came out in 1858-59, Dr. Holmes took his place definitely among the immortals.

Such admirable poems as *The Chambered Nautilus* and *The Deacon's Masterpiece* appeared in *The Autocrat*, and the collected *Songs in Many Keys* of 1862 further established their author's poetical fame. Finally, the narrative-sketch running through *The Professor*, itself not so perfect in table-talk as its companion volume, suggested a new vein to Dr. Holmes, to find expression in *Elsie Venner* (1861), *The Guardian Angel* (1867), and *A Mortal Antipathy* (1885).

In writing fiction, however, he has never secured universal applause. It may be that one resents a flavour of the consulting-room hovering over his two earliest novels. Undoubtedly, the subjects are ab-



normal, generally attractive to men of science alone. Yet in both the psychology is mature, the observation subtle, the humour beyond reproach. As pictures of New English village life they have indeed the permanent qualities of genuine wit. Moreover, in other respects they stand almost alone, and must always be accounted worthy of serious consideration, apart from their powers in giving pleasure to all readers.

The less notable *A Mortal Antipathy* belongs to that veteran age of unbroken spirit during which he issued, with scarcely diminished vivacity, *The Poet at the Breakfast-Table*, *Over the Teacups*, and the autobiographical *Our Hundred Days in Europe*, besides four volumes of miscellaneous verse.

His sociable and kindly pen was now largely occupied with memorial verses to those for whom its gayer service had been ever ready in days gone by; and on October 7, 1894, he too, the survivor of many, entered into a well-earned rest. Unprejudiced, large-hearted, and humane, his spirit lives among us to-day, a true friend to humanity.

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## CHAPTER XV.

FRANCIS BRET HARTE.

Born 1839 A.D. . . . . Died 1902 A.D.

THERE is a paragraph in Bret Harte's own article on *The Rise of Short Story* which explains at once the most characteristic qualities of his work and its relation to the earlier literature of his country.

“ But while the American literary imagination was still under the influence of English tradition, an unexpected factor was developing to diminish its power. It was *humour*, of a quality as distinct and original as the country and civilization in which it was developed. It was at first noticeable in the anecdote or ‘story,’ and, after the fashion of such beginnings, was orally transmitted. It was common in the bar-rooms, the gatherings in the ‘country store,’ and finally in the mouths of ‘stump orators.’ Arguments were clinched and political principles illustrated by ‘a funny story.’ It invaded even the

camp meeting and the pulpit. It at last received the currency of the public press. But wherever met it was so distinctly original and novel, so individual and characteristic, that it was at once known and appreciated abroad as 'an American story.' Crude at first, it received literary polish in the press, but its dominant quality remained. It was concise and condense, yet suggestive. It was delightfully extravagant, or a miracle of understatement. It voiced not only the dialect, but the habits of thought of a people or locality. It gave new interest to slang. From a paragraph of a dozen lines it grew into half a column, but always retaining its conciseness and felicity of statement. It was a foe to prolixity of any kind; it admitted no fine writing nor affectation of style. It went directly to the point. It was burdened by no conscientiousness; it was often irrelevant; it was devoid of all moral responsibility, but it was original! By degrees it developed character with its incident, often in a few lines; gave a striking photograph of a community or a section; but always reached its conclusion without an unnecessary word. It became—and still exists as—an essential feature of newspaper literature. It was the parent of the American short story."

It was Bret Harte himself, without doubt, who first gave "literary polish" to this movement, and, by a rare union of "American humour" with "American pathos," became a founder and a pioneer.

Despite the distinctive character of his genius and the universal recognition it received, he remained singularly modest to the end; and it was his consistent aversion to ever depending on literature for a livelihood which led him through so many, not always congenial, experiences, and, while no doubt broadening his outlook, made his life so full of varied incident, so hard to summarize in a few pages.

Born at Albany, New York, on August 25, 1839, he was the son of a Greek professor, and thus inherited academic influences. But early delicacy made strenuous application impossible, and from the first he was fortunately encouraged to develop principally by observation of nature and mankind. He was also a keen reader, and as a boy expressed the almost unmeasured admiration for Dickens which he retained throughout life. At eleven he wrote a satirical poem on his "dissatisfaction with things in general," called *Autumn Musings*, which was printed in the New York *Sunday Atlas*, but read with derision by all his family

—a rebuff which, however well-meant, he never forgot.

In 1856, just six years later, on the death of his father, Bret Harte embarked upon the first adventure of his life, of which the consequences were destined to be so far-reaching. He went west, and saw life in San Francisco. Here, indeed, was abundant material for his already acute observation: a city in the "first tottering steps of its development into the metropolis of California;" the "peculiar quality" of its humour; the strange influence of "steamer night;" the picturesque Spanish quarter, "preserving customs, speech, and dress" of three centuries ago; the "fearful joy" of the gambling saloons, where he "became a man;" the opium-eating John Chinaman, "never fraternizing with the foreign devil," bringing "an atmosphere of the Arabian Nights into the hard modern civilization." He loved and absorbed everything, down to the "Greaser," or Mexican—his index-finger steeped in cigarette stains; his velvet jacket and his crimson sash; the "combined odour of tobacco, burned paper, and garlic" which marked the "hard-voiced city." Not finding congenial employment in San Francisco, however, he soon joined the gold-seeking "argonauts of '49," and planted a new series of character-sketches in his retentive brain.

He tried his hand at practical digging for gold, and afterwards became in turn an expressman, a druggist, a printer, and a schoolmaster, incidentally gaining experience in war with the Indians. But soon after coming of age the desire for something like a settled existence came upon Bret Harte, and, returning to San Francisco, he obtained, through his  
 1861 A.D. knowledge of printing, a position in the composing-room of the once famous *Golden Era*, where soon appeared one of his finest stories, the fascinating *Miss*. On August 11, 1862, he married Miss Anna Griswold, and—still distrusting the pen as breadwinner—became secretary to the United States Branch

Mint. At this period he wrote also for *The Californian*, and met Mark Twain. From the beginning he was a careful writer, often destroying a dozen manuscripts before he had satisfied himself over one paragraph. His first published volume—the collection of verses entitled *The Lost Galleon*, which appeared in 1865—exhibits his fastidious choice of words, and contains some of his most popular humorous pieces, besides a few lyrics of the Civil War. By 1868 he became editor of *The Overland Monthly New Series*, destined for fame throughout the civilized world by the appearance in its pages of *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, and with it a new force in literature. We are told that this matchless tale was nearly suppressed through the susceptibilities of a lady proof-reader; but Bret Harte, knowing his wife approved, asserted his editorial authority, and, as events proved, found himself thereby. In the same paper he soon issued *The Outcasts of Poker Flat, Miggles*, the famous *Tennessee's Partner*, and, rather later, *The Heathen Chinees*—immortal verses, actually entitled *Plain Language from Truthful James—Table Mountain* (1870). The popularity of this marvellous poem, by which the author himself set little store, established his reputation in England, and inspired an invitation to New York which practical considerations forbade his refusing.

Though always disliking the position, Bret Harte henceforth found himself compelled to play the part of literary lion, and seeing his work everywhere in demand, drifted inevitably along paths of existence which, if more comfortable, were also less varied than those of his youth.

Here he wrote a play, *Two Men of Sandy Bar* (not approved by the critics), and his one, not quite successful, long novel, *Gabriel Conroy* (which was, however, a favourite of its author's), besides embarking, much against his own will, on the lecturing tours which were soon to become so prominent a feature in his life on both sides of the Atlantic. Though dis-

liking the enforced publicity of such a life, he enjoyed the increased opportunity of travel, and never lost his keen appreciation of new localities. But circumstances brought him other worries. He was generous and hospitable, without any capacity for financial management, and, though he left no debts, was constantly embarrassed. It was the old determination against dependence on literature, aggravated by these circumstances, which led to his accepting the consulate of Crefeld in Prussia and leaving America (in 1878), never to return.

On his way to these new duties he visited England and "the grave of Dickens," returning at frequent intervals as a welcome and honoured A.D. guest. The work at Crefeld, indeed, was mechanical and monotonous, the life lonely, and if he did not entirely escape the accusation of neglecting it, one can scarcely wonder or blame. He made many efforts: after a change, and two years later obtained a transference to Glasgow, where he welcomed the memory of Burns and Scott and the friendship of William Black. At first, indeed, he tried "to get up a good reputation," and stayed at his "post pretty regularly;" but invitations, personal and public, flowed in, and he made friends in every corner of Great Britain. Of these, fortunately, at least one—Madame van Velde—set about earnestly persuading him to resume authorship. Under such kindly stimulus he wrote *Flip*, *Found at Blazing Star*, and, once well started, worked on with a will. It now began to be said, however, that "the only place where he is sure *not* to be found is at the Glasgow Consulate;" and in 1885 he abandoned official work, settling in London until his death.

The dramatic qualities of Bret Harte's work are obvious, and though he never himself attempted a successor to *Two Men of Sandy Bar*, many of his tales were dramatized by him in conjunction with professional playwrights, of whom he chiefly trusted Dion Boucicault, as among actors he most admired John

Hare. Piratical versions were also appearing constantly in America, often to his discredit. At one time he was very eager to write a libretto for Sir Arthur Sullivan.

His final volume was a second series of the famous *Condensed Novels*, published posthumously; his last and shortest tale was written on April 17, 1902. On May 5 he died. An operation proved powerless to check a throat trouble which had for some years been at the root of his recurring ill-health.

As Hawthorne for American romance and Whitman for American poetry, so stands Bret Harte the pre-eminent example—nay, the originator—of American humour and American pathos. The blend has since grown mightily in popular favour, both here and in the States, but no one variety is either so purely typical in form, so masterly in expression, whether in prose or verse. It is impossible here even to name the many children of Bret Harte's brain with whom we have laughed or wept, to enumerate the many volumes in which they live. Every one is stamped with the hall-mark of genius; every one reveals the land of their nativity—a national heritage of which America may well be proud.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

JOHN FISKE.

Born 1842 A.D.....Died 1901 A.D.

JOHN FISKE, philosopher and historian, was born at Hartford, Connecticut, on March 30, 1842, but brought up by his grandmother at Middleton. He showed considerable precocity in boyhood, reading widely in ancient and modern languages. His original name was Edmund Fiske Green; but in 1855 he took the name of his maternal grandfather, and was always known by it. He studied law at Harvard, and opened



an office in Boston, but from the first devoted his main energies to writing on philosophical subjects. In fact, his life was always that of student—reaching and stimulating mankind through his books and through lectures at Harvard.

Fiske may be said to have made two reputations, of which the second will in all probability prove the more permanent. He first attracted attention as an enthusiastic interpreter of Darwin and Spencer, to whose message, however, he claims to have made some additions, and with whose conclusions he linked a theistic-positivist philosophy which is not particularly conclusive or satisfying. His *Century of Science* (1899) is both learned and clear, going far to establish the modest claim put forth in the preface of *Through Nature to God*: “The detection of the part played by the lengthening of infancy in the genesis of the human race is my own especial contribution to the doctrine of evolution.”

*The Idea of God as Affected by Modern Knowledge* (1885) contains some suggestive discussions of its important subject; while *The Destiny of Man, Viewed in the Light of His Origin* (1884), after demonstrating the fact of physical evolution, maintains the superiority of spiritual forces, and discovers in “humanity a certain new idea of the *advantageous*, which is at once moral and unselfish.”

Fiske, however, will live as a historian. His work here is devoted to studies, in a general unified manner, of separate yet related episodes in American history. Of these, the most important was published first. *The Critical Period of American History, 1783–1789*, records, with masterly thoroughness and precision, the consolidation of the States into a government and the formation of a constitution. The other periods treated (between 1888 and 1892) by Fiske with scholarly power are: *The Discovery of America, Old Virginia and her Neighbours, The Beginnings of New England, Dutch and Quaker Colonies in America*, and *The Ameri-*

*can Revolution*. He also wrote a few more general volumes, of which *American Political Ideas* (1885) is the most popular.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS (MARK TWAIN).

Born 1835 A.D. . . . . Died 1910 A.D.

MARK TWAIN was born in Florida, Missouri, on November 30, 1835, and began life as a printer. But the roving instinct was no less firmly rooted in his own character than in his books, though, naturally enough, the earlier experiences of life appear more prominently in maturer work.

The great humorist borrowed his pseudonym from a phrase with which, as a pilot on the Mississippi, he must have been early familiar. No reader of his thrilling stories is ignorant of the frequent necessity for avoiding shallows in the mighty river. How often, then, must the man sounding have bid young Clemens record Mark Twain—"by the mark two fathoms"! What wonder that the catching phrase haunted his memory?

But authorship did not immediately follow this exciting manner of life. The adventurer afterwards threw himself into the turmoil of silver mining at Nevada, and only at thirty-one settled down (temporarily) to journalism and lecturing in San Francisco, varied by flying visits to New York.

It was, indeed, three years later (in 1867) that chance gave him the opportunity which actually inspired his first book. Joining a pleasure party through France, Italy, and Palestine, his ready wit flew out towards the ridiculous aspect of the average tourist, and a hundred and twenty-five thousand copies of *Innocents Abroad* (published in 1869, when he was thirty-four) were sold in three years.

Mark Twain now enjoyed an established reputation for humour. His quaint originality of thought and expression is irresistible. It may, indeed, be objected that he at times betrays lack of reverence in daring much upon natural affinities between the sublime and the ridiculous; but we must perforce laugh too heartily for solemn criticism. When, twenty-one years later, he issued the companion *A Tramp Abroad*, it proved equally popular, and few of us would willingly spare either.

After his first success, Mark Twain married Miss Langdon, a wealthy lady of Buffalo, New York, and turned publisher, but in no sense gave up writing. Of recent years he lost much money in a publishing venture, and brought out an entertaining *Autobiography* (1898).

It must not be supposed, however, that his great reputation throughout the reading world rests exclusively upon such travel-farces as we have described above. In the first place, it would appear that a closer acquaintance with the older civilizations has stimulated this son of the New World to certain novel interpretations of history which, if not always quite decorously expressed, have their value. Mark Twain has imagined that we lay too much stress on the idealism of chivalry. He is seriously angry with our implied indifference to "the people" of the "good old days." This characteristic attitude appears, with graceful pleasantry, in his *Prince and the Pauper*, but rather more crudely in *A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*. His *Recollections of Joan of Arc* reveal similar tendencies of thought.

It is not necessary here to dwell on the vigour and charm of his classic *Life on the Mississippi* (1883). Few men, probably, have known and loved the river so well; none, assuredly, have written with equal abandon or comprehension of the adventurous life between its shores. The volume is more thrilling than any work of pure imagination. Yet, in all probability,

we may not look even here for the work on which Mark Twain's permanent claim to rank in literature will ultimately rest. This, we think, is to be found in his three extraordinary revelations of American boyhood—or, more strictly speaking, in the first two volumes of the series. *Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885) are indeed immortal creations. *Huckleberry Finn as Detective* (1897) is less convincing. We do not believe those fascinating boys ever grew up. It is, indeed, impossible to conceive of character more intensely national and yet more absolutely human. No English boy can read of them without longing to fly to America and prove that, given their chances, he too might prove himself a man. And he would succeed. For while the circumstances, the language, and the outer mannerisms are of America American, Mark Twain has penetrated into the very heart of boyhood the world over, and painted it for us with virile sympathy, for which we may elsewhere search in vain.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS.

Born 1837 A.D.

MR. HOWELLS and Mr. Henry James unquestionably are the only living American novelists who can be called classics. Though not so original as his great compatriot, Mr. Howells's stories have a very distinctive charm, and in their own way are no less preeminently characteristic of their origin.

The novelist was born at Martin's Ferry, Belmont County, Ohio, on March 1, 1837, from Welsh Quaker origin, and brought up as a Swedenborgian. His father was a printer and journalist, and young Howells imbibed familiarity with presswork from earliest school-

days. Indeed, he began as a poet and critic, not finding his proper bent until 1871, when he was thirty-four. From that time onward he has delighted his many admirers with a brilliant series of humorous character-sketches, which may yet "be continued." His first novel, *Their Wedding Journey*, was immediately popular, and must still be regarded as typical of his best work.

Mr. Howells, indeed, has always retained some attributes of the Quaker. There is a certain decorous sobriety about his work, despite its realism in detail, which is more subtle than profound, and reveals a quiet determination in going his own way. He does not trouble himself overmuch about either plot or construction; his story is always studiously simple, if not commonplace. Having chosen his atmosphere and the type of characters best fitted for his background, he proceeds upon their development with leisurely care and scrupulous attention to detail. To modern readers, familiar with more compact intensity, his elaborate analyses of the familiar may seem tedious, but its effects are perfectly legitimate. They build up character and reflect life with a firm lucidity which holds the memory. One never forgets good old *Silas Lapham* (1885) or the fascinating *Lady of the Aroostook* (1879), as one easily may forget characters more emotionally stimulating.

Like so many other American writers, Mr. Howells was for some years consul at Venice; and the carefully-drawn portraits of his fellow-countrymen, expanding under Italian civilization, which grace his pages, reveal many permanent and attractive national characteristics.

Among his more popular novels we may name: *A Chance Acquaintance* (1873), *A Foregone Conclusion* (1874), *A Modern Instance* (1882), *Indian Summer* (1886), and *The World of Chance* (1893). It should not be forgotten that Mr. Howells was for fifteen years editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*, and has always shown himself ready to encourage talent, while exerting a

beneficent influence on the trend of criticism in America.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

HENRY JAMES.

Born 1843 A.D.

THOUGH born in America, and always writing from a transatlantic standpoint, Mr. Henry James, junior, has now been so long resident in London, and has so thoroughly identified himself with our thought and literature, as to be often claimed as an English writer. His books have all been published here, and his style has had much influence on our younger men.

It has always seemed to us that Mr. Henry James, either by accident or of deliberate purpose, once revealed something of his elusive personal attitude in *The Awkward Age* (1899). Mr. Longdon, of course, is a creation, not a portrait, but his attitude of whimsical, tolerant pride and insatiable curiosity towards the "smart set" is that of the writer himself; and to the humanity beneath mannerisms he is an affectionate and keenly appreciative onlooker.

Here, too, Mr. James adopts in its final form that mode of realism which is peculiarly his own. His characters are perpetually engaged in analyzing their own emotions, thus stultifying their impulse to action, and they delight in elaborate discussions of the process. Yet while thus speaking of what in real life we allow ourselves only to think, they do not use the elemental language of passion (proper to great dramas), but retain instead the elusive and detached conversational style of a polished and reticent civilization. Thus it happens that all they do and say is so bewilderingly unreal, and they themselves are so convincing. Thus, too, Mr. James sees life.

To a large extent our novelist has been accepted,



not without some protest from over the water, as the official interpreter of the American character. His exquisite sketch of *Daisy Miller* (1878)—most pathetic of girl butterflies—created a permanent type in fiction which we have, perhaps too readily, declared national ; while the altogether manly, attractive, and equally pathetic hero of *The American* (1877) offers the reverse side of the picture. We should imagine that by these two works, absolutely diverse in scope and manner, Mr. James first became generally known in this country, and that they are still more widely read than any others.

*The Europeans* (1878), obviously contemplated as a sort of companion volume to *The American*, has never been reckoned so fine a book ; but in *Roderick Hudson* (1875) and *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) we have Mr. James at his best. Without the fine-drawn subtlety of his later manner, they exhibit a finished original style, and reveal unusual power in character-drawing. In each the story is eminently dramatic and absorbing, the persons are intensely human, the thought is clear, the emotions are passionate.

*The Bostonians* (1886), on the other hand, is laid entirely in America, and, perhaps, may be regarded as its author's greatest triumph in his sublime indifference to plot. Though somewhat exceeding the average length of the normal full-blooded novel, it is no more than a study in temperament. There are only three characters of any intrinsic importance, and about half a dozen supernumeraries ; practically nothing happens from the beginning to the end ; and yet the reader's interest becomes steadily more absorbed to the last page. The revelation of human souls, hesitating, tortured, and baffled by circumstances, is masterly.

Here we may—roughly, indeed, but with sufficient exactness—draw the line between the earlier and later manners of Mr. Henry James. Many readers will unhesitatingly regard the novels already named as

the most important of his great books ; others prefer those of the last ten years. This, perhaps, is a somewhat superior taste, possible only to the intellectual epicure. Our novelist has reduced the analysis of emotion to a fine art. He seldom gives us a direct description of persons or events, but seems rather intent on probing the innermost secrets of the human heart and laying them bare for general inspection. He strives to express not what men suppose they feel or are in the habit of saying they feel, but the actual impulses which govern their moods and actions, the secret fear, the hidden joy, or the inarticulate resolve. Once we have mastered the original methods requisite to such searching analysis, we learn to find his characters intensely human, and, for all their apparent complexity, most passionately alive.

It would be impossible to estimate or even to name in a few paragraphs the numerous studies in emotion—not, we admit, all equally successful—which Mr. James has recently issued, often giving us two in one year.

*The Tragic Muse* (1890) may, perhaps, be said to have opened the series. This was followed by *The Real Thing* (1893) ; *Terminations* (1896) ; the rather unpleasant but fascinating *What Maisie Knew*, and the wonderful *Spoils of Poynton* (1897) ; *The Two Magics*, touching the supernatural (1898) ; *The Sacred Fount* (1901) ; and, in 1903, the somewhat perplexing *The Better Sort*, as well as that masterpiece *The Ambassador*.

There are others ; and meanwhile Mr. James has been continuously exercising that art of which we have intentionally delayed mention because of his supreme excellence therein—the art of writing short stories.

Of these, *Daisy Miller* and those of the same volume have been, and will probably remain, the most popular, though we should hesitate in comparing them with *The Madonna of the Future*—surely the most pathetic picture ever conceived of blind idealism. The simple,

hopeless tragedy of *Four Meetings* is perhaps even stronger ; and our praise would be only varied, not qualified, by extending the list. Here Mr. Henry James, without discarding his gift for subtlety, yet succeeds in the dramatic effect on a small canvas, in which no detail of character seems to have been overlooked, no impetus to emotion, however minute, omitted, no detail in the process of development slurred over. Each tale, if externally slight and fragmentary, is yet complete, satisfying, and perfectly finished.

It should not be forgotten that our author has also published several remarkable volumes of essays, part descriptive or reminiscent, and part critical. His impressions of places and of national types are always vivid and suggestive ; his estimates of literature, particularly the French, are peculiarly convincing.

Mr. Henry James, indeed, has more influence on his fellow-craftsman in letters than on the general public. We cannot suppose that he will ever become widely popular, but wherever known, he commands the deepest respect, and his work stands out, by its artistic qualities, over the babel of contemporary fiction.

## CHAPTER XX.

### OTHER WRITERS.

#### POETS.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT (1794-1878), "the Wordsworth of America," was born at Cummington, Massachusetts. He began to rhyme early, and some of his poems were printed when he was only fourteen years old. He studied law and practised it for ten years. He could not, however, resist the attractions of literature, and in 1825 he went to reside in New York, and soon obtained congenial employment. In the follow-

ing year he joined the staff of *The Evening Post*, and was connected with it, as contributor, editor, and part proprietor, till the close of his life. Bryant travelled much, both in Europe and in America, and wrote interesting accounts of his journeys; but it is on his poetry that his fame chiefly rests. He occupies a place beside Longfellow among popular American poets. His finest poem—in some respects the finest poem produced in the New World—is *Thanatopsis*, a view of death. It was written before the poet was twenty years of age, and the clear and pensive beauty of expression reminds us of Wordsworth; but it is instinct with a profound and serene philosophy which is the poet's own. *The Ages*, *Lines to a Water-fowl*, and *The Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood*, are among Bryant's finest poems.

NATHANIEL PARKER WILLIS (1806–1867) was born at Portland, Maine. He is best known to British readers by his Scriptural pieces, such as *The Daughter of Jairus* and *The Shunamite Mother*. Some of the most highly finished of these were written while he was yet a student at Yale. He became a journalist by profession. He was the editor of *The New York Mirror*, and afterwards joint-editor with Mr. G. P. Morris of *The Home Journal*. Most of his prose works are reprints of articles—for example, *Rural Letters*, *People I Have Met*, *Life Here and There*. He spent a good deal of time in Europe, and found there material for such works as *Pencillings by the Way*, *Loiterings of Travel*, and *A Summer Cruise in the Mediterranean*. His books show genuine love of nature, and are written in a sprightly, graceful style that has a flavour of Leigh Hunt. He also wrote in a romantic style, of which *Melanie* and *Lord Ivon and his Daughter* are good specimens. His Scriptural poems have been the most popular of his writings, though in the opinion of many such sweet natural lyrics as *Better Moments*, and *Lines to a City Pigeon*, far surpass his more elaborate writings.

THOMAS WILLIAM PARSONS (1819-1892), dentist, was a native of Boston, who, besides producing much graceful verse, gave up the greater part of his life to the study and translation of Dante. He issued the first ten cantos of the *Inferno* in 1843, afterwards completing a large portion of *The Purgatorio* and a few fragments of the *Paradiso*. The work is both faithful and charming, while his lifelong devotion to a lofty ambition argues much nobility of nature.

CHARLES GODFREY LELAND (1824-1903) was born in Philadelphia, and proved himself in many directions a most versatile and spirited writer. He edited, wrote, and published books during the greater part of his long life. His best-known works are the really humorous *Hans Breitmann Ballads* (1871), and he was unusually successful in the difficult feat of translating Heine.

BAYARD TAYLOR (1825-1878) was born at Kennett Square, Chester County, Pennsylvania, of Quaker stock, and began life as a young farmer. But he loved books, and at the age of sixteen published verses in a Philadelphia newspaper, some of which were included in his first volume of poetry (1844), afterwards repudiated. In the July of the same year he crossed to England, remaining abroad for two years, visiting Germany and Italy. *Views Afoot ; or, Europe seen with Knapsack and Staff* (1846) was republished five times within the year, and, winning the praise of competent critics, compelled its author to depend more on books of travel than on the poetry he loved. A volume of letters from the goldfields, entitled *El Dorado* (1850), was equally popular, and followed by many similar works, not pre-eminently observant or thoughtful, but wholesomely wide-awake. Further inspired by foreign climes, Taylor published *Poems of the Orient* (1854)—a graceful reflection of a fascinating region ; the ambitious *Picture of St. John* (1866)—a poetical autobiography coloured by the charm of Italy ; and *Lars* (1873)—a blank-verse pastoral of

Norway and Pennsylvania. He also wrote novels—the satirical *Hannah Thurston* (1863), a study in Bohemianism called *John Godfrey's Fortunes* (1864), and the semi-historical *Story of Kennett* (1866). But Taylor's greatest achievement is his translation of *Faust* (1870-1871). The continuous inspiration of the original masterpiece here lent him a depth of feeling and thought he could never acquire unaided, and as a translator he ranks above Longfellow. His popularity declined with later years, but at the last he was made minister to Germany, dying ten months after his appointment in his library at Berlin.

JOHN HAY (1838-1905) was born at Salem, Indiana, and educated for the Bar. He became one of Lincoln's private secretaries during the war, and afterwards practised diplomacy at Paris, Vienna, and Madrid. It was, however, as ambassador to Great Britain (from 1897 to the Spanish-American War) that he chiefly distinguished himself in poetry and statecraft. He died a Secretary of State. In *The Pike County Ballads*, which includes *Jim Bludso*, Hay revealed a gift for vigorous dialect verse which recalls Lowell, and has won him an assured position wherever the English language is read or spoken. His manly, outspoken characters once known are not easily forgotten. *Castilian Days* also contains fine work; and his *History of the Administration of Abraham Lincoln*, written in collaboration with J. G. Nicolay, is the authoritative biography of the great President.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH (1836-1907), though born at Portsmouth and closely associated with New England, is one of the most striking figures of the transition period which saw New York once more the literary capital of America. He edited *The Atlantic Monthly* for nine years, after writing for various journals in New York. His poetry, collected in many volumes, is brilliant and witty. He also wrote a few graceful novels, of which *The Queen of Sheba* and *Marjorie Dawe* are the best known. *The Ballad of*



*Babie Bell and other Poems*, appeared in 1855; *Cloth of Gold and other Poems*, in 1874; *Lyrics and Sonnets* in 1880.

SIDNEY LANIER (1842-1881) was born at Macon, Georgia, and educated at Oglethorpe College. He was thus, like Poe, a Southerner, and is generally regarded among Southerners as second only to the author of *The Raven*. He served in the Confederate army, at one time as a blockade runner; became a schoolmaster after the war; and also practised law. Spending his later years in Baltimore, he for a time supported himself by playing the flute in the Peabody Symphony Concerts, and in 1879 was appointed lecturer on English literature at the Johns Hopkins University. The lectures appeared in volume form—*The Science of English Verse* (1881), *The English Novel and the Principles of Its Development* (1883). At the age of twenty-five he published a novel called *Tiger Lilies*, but his chief interest through life was in poetry; and, had he been stronger in health, it seems probable his fine imagination would have borne richer fruit. His *Poems*, edited by his wife in 1884, reveal a fascinating character, inspired by lofty ideals; but their appeal is not popular, and the volume is known only to the more eager lovers of literature. *Corn* and *The Marshes of Glynn* are the favourites among his long poems, and every American anthology contains some of his lyrics.

(WILLIAM) BLISS CARMAN (1861) was born at Fredericton, New Brunswick, and studied law at Harvard. He afterwards practised as a civil engineer, did a little schoolmastering, and edited *The New York Independent* from 1890 to 1892. His earliest volume of poetry, *Low Tide on Grand Pré*, appeared in 1893, but he is best known by the series (written with Richard Hovey) entitled *Songs*, *More Songs*, and *Last Songs from Vagabondia*, which were published between 1894 and 1900. Mr. Carman also wrote an *Ode on the Coronation of King Edward*, and five tuneful volumes, *Pipes of Pan* (1902-1905).

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- RICHARD HENRY DANA.—(1787-1879)—Cambridge, Massachusetts—*The Buccaneer ; Thoughts on the Soul*. Also an able essayist and lecturer.
- GEORGE PERKINS MORRIS.—(1802-1864)—Philadelphia—journalist—author of well-known *Woodman, Spare that Tree*.
- SAMUEL FRANCIS SMITH.—(1808-1895)—Boston—Baptist clergyman—author of the American national hymn.
- JOHN GODFREY SAXE.—(1816-1887)—Vermont—*Rhyme of the Rail ; The Blind Man and the Elephant*, etc.
- RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.—(1825-1903)—Hingham, Massachusetts—civil servant, journalist—*Footprints ; Songs in Summer ; The Book of the East ; The Lion's Cub, and Other Verse*.
- CHARLES GRAHAM HALPINE.—(1829-1868)—born in Ireland—well known as "Private Miles O'Reilly."
- EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.—(1833-1908)—Hartford, Connecticut—journalist, stockbroker—*Alice of Monmouth ; The Blameless Prince ; Hawthorne, and Other Poems*.
- LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.—(1835-1908)—Pomfret, Connecticut—*Bedtime Stories ; Swallow Flights ; Random Rambles ; In the Garden of Dreams*, etc.
- JOAQUIN MILLER.—(1841)—Indiana—miner, judge, and editor—he has no more regard for rhyme or rhythm than Whitman—*Songs of the Sierras ; Songs of Italy ; Songs of the Mexican Seas*, etc.
- RICHARD WATSON GILDER.—(1844-1909)—Bordentown, New Jersey—editor of *The Century*—*The New Day ; Lyrics ; The Celestial Passion*, etc.
- EUGENE FIELD.—(1850-1895)—St. Louis, Missouri—journalist—the most popular of American verse-writers for children—*With Trumpet and Drum* (containing the well-known *Wynken, Blynken, and Nod*).
- ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.—(1855)—Johnstown Centre, Wisconsin—*Poems of Passion ; Poems of Pleasure*, etc.

## NOVELISTS.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE (1811-1896)—"the little woman who made the war"—was born at Litchfield, Connecticut, and grew up in an atmosphere of deep religious emotions, united to exceptional fluency of expression. Her father, Lyman Beecher, was a celebrated Congregationalist, and all her numerous brothers entered the ministry—one, at least, achieving distinction. She was herself a very precocious writer on theological topics, and passed through a prolonged phase of rather morbid piety, characteristic of her age and surroundings. In 1836 she married the widowed Rev. Calvin E. Stowe, a theological professor, whose serious

learning was happily blended with humour. Throughout her long life, Mrs. Stowe was fully occupied with domestic activities, writing her great book under the stress of actual poverty, and never allowing her subsequent reputation to entail any neglect of home. She started authorship with very modest journalism, and was inspired to write *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by pure zeal for the cause. At first issued serially in *The National Era* (1851-52), it did not attract very much attention, but three thousand copies of the book were sold on the day of publication. Naturally, the authoress was at first no less blamed than applauded at home; but in England and on the Continent she soon became celebrated, and received her honours with modest dignity. She was throughout life genuinely concerned to accept her responsibilities as the champion of a great cause. Her second slavery story, *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp* (1856), though considered superior by some, really contains more faults in construction, and is based on less trustworthy observation. *The Minister's Wooing* (1859) and *Old Town Folks* (1869) proved her a pioneer in these sketches of Old-World New England life which Miss Wilkins and others have since made so vitally popular, and have an abiding value as social documents. She afterwards attempted to describe modern life, but without much success, and her *Lady Byron Vindicated* (1870) does more credit to her feelings than her judgment. At the advanced age of eighty-four she died peacefully, amidst universal honour.

It has been long fashionable to dismiss *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a somewhat hysterical product of prejudiced sentimentalism; but works that only appeal to the emotions of a moment, however general and patriotic, do not live. Its faults as a work of art are many and obvious, yet it is an artistic achievement, at once realistic and imaginative. The presentment of character is vivid and varied, the dialogue is often masterly, the humour is no less genuine than the pathos. While

sternly pointing a moral, Mrs. Stowe has left us a singularly vivacious picture of life, as picturesque as it was spiritually rotten. She never shirked the kindlier aspects of slavery, and took infinite pains about her facts. Above all, she could tell a story. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is alive to-day, and criticism is powerless against it.

HERMAN MELVILLE (1819-1891) was born in New York, and ran away to sea as a cabin-boy, not because his home was in any way unhappy. He was driven by a craving that gave him no peace on land, until fame and domesticity tamed the inherent love of adventure. It was, however, the later voyage of 1842 to 1846, on a whaler bound for the South Seas, that provided the chief material for his famous romances. *Typee* (1846) and *Omoo* (1847) were immediately successful in England and America, though readers have been found to question their credibility; but his real masterpiece was *Moby Dick, or, The White Whale*, which appeared in 1852 and narrowly misses being the greatest sea-story in literature. This marvellous work has all the passion and charm of true sailing; the very breath of the ocean fills its stirring pages; but, alas, it is impossibly long, and the author too frequently ruins his style by copying Carlyle. In later life, Melville became a custom-house official, and published novels of no particular distinction.

DONALD GRANT MITCHELL ("Ik Marvel") (1822-1909) was born at Norwich, Connecticut, and already his work may seem a little old-fashioned; but *The Reveries of a Bachelor* (1850) secured phenomenal popularity in its day, and the gentle sentiment of its somewhat commonplace domesticity is both delicate and attractive. Mr. Mitchell studied law, and was for a time consul at Venice; but he settled on his farm, producing more novels, which, if not exactly distinguished, were always charmingly finished. Among these we may name *Dr. Johns* (1866), *Daniel Tyler* (1883), and *Bound Together* (1884). Mr. Mitchell also wrote the interesting

*Battle Summer of Paris*, 1848, which came out just a year after the events so graphically described.

THEODORE WINTHROP (1828-1861) was born at Newhaven, Connecticut, of a historic family; did some surveying, and studied law. But, despite discouragement from publishers, he persisted in wooing literature, and won repute for his spirited account of the great march on Washington by the 7th Regiment of New York, with whom he enlisted, and in whose ranks he met death. His brilliant novels—*Cecil Dreeme*, *John Brent*, and *Edwin Brothertoft*—were all published posthumously, and show a promise of breezy effectiveness which might have produced a masterly writer of fiction had he lived to mature them.

FITZJAMES O'BRIEN (1828-1862) was born in County Limerick, but only became a writer of note after settling in America, about ten years before his death. There he was a welcome contributor to such papers as *Harper's* and *The Atlantic Monthly*, where, either in prose or verse, he showed original genius and versatility. As a poet he lives chiefly through about forty pieces selected by Mr. Winter, among which may be mentioned *Prizefight*, *The Wharf-Rat*, and *Zouaves*. The thirteen stories, preserved by the same editor, are very striking, and though many of them are clearly written under the influence of Poe, must not be passed over as mere imitations. *The Diamond Lens* is, perhaps, the most popular, though *What Was I?* may be considered even more original and effective. *Wondersmith* suggests, without paling beside, Hawthorne; and the uncanny *Mother-of-Pearl*, once read, is not easily forgotten.

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT (1832-1888) grew up in the very heart of the Transcendental movement, and, like Maria Edgeworth, made literature out of her father's idealist experiments in education. Amos Bronson Alcott was one of the most enthusiastic of the Brook Farmers, and afterwards lost money by setting up the even more communistic Fruitlands. He established a school

at the once famous Masonic Temple, Boston, at which the children were taught everything by free discussion with their highly-mystical headmaster, and at eighty-one travelled five thousand miles in winter in order to "converse" on the most abstract philosophy. He was a friend of Emerson's, and a copious contributor to *The Dial*. His second daughter, Louisa May, produced from this somewhat chaotic idealism a little series of stories for children, which have long held their own on both sides of the Atlantic, and are probably destined for immortality. In *Little Women*; *Little Women Wedded, or, Good Wives*; and *Little Men*, she has drawn a few simple pictures of American girlhood and described a "perfect" school with a humorous freshness and sympathy that is quite irresistible. Every page is alive with the most touching humanity; and, though earnestly religious and consciously moral, she never becomes tiresome or didactic. Once known, her characters are never forgotten; and those who cannot number *Little Women* among the friends of their childhood have missed an unfailing source of happiness.

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT (1849), though born in Manchester, England, has spent the greater part of her life in the States, and has always been known as an American novelist. Her earlier work, indeed, was entirely concerned with English life, and it is uncertain whether she has ever done anything finer than the pathetic north-country sketch, *That Lass o' Lowrie's* (1877), or its stronger companion volume, *Haworth's* (1879), which recalls Mrs. Gaskell. On the other hand, *Louisiana* (a fascinating sketch of character), and that profound tragedy, *Through One Administration*, are entirely American; while the humorous *Fair Barbarian* records the startling effects of a "young person" from the States visiting a quiet village in the old country. Mrs. Burnett's most zealous admirers will not so readily accept either the somewhat sentimental appeal of her *Little Lord Fauntleroy* and other



tales (afterwards dramatized), or the melodramatic originality of *A Lady of Quality* (1896) and *His Grace of Osmonde* (1897). In both manners she has proved herself eminently successful and popular. These later volumes, indeed, have carried her reputation further afield than her more artistic earlier work.

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN (1857) is a native of Philadelphia, and organized the first free kindergartens on the Pacific coast—a work in which she still takes a keen interest. She has written a number of volumes, mainly distinguished by humour and a marked literary flavour. They are not quite full-blown novels, but contain admirable sketches of character, linked about sketchy narratives, owing much to her own knowledge of Europe. *A Cathedral Courtship* (1893) is a dainty love-tale; the various *Penelope* volumes are very popular; and *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* (1903) is one of the most fascinating children in fiction.

OWEN WISTER (1860) was born at Philadelphia and educated at Harvard. Though called to the Bar, he has given his main energies to writing, and is now well to the front among the younger American novelists, besides contributing several volumes to the admirable "Sportsman's Library." He made his name by *The Dragon of Wantley—His Tail* (1892), though many readers prefer *The Virginian*, *The Jimmy John Boss* (1900) or *Lady Baltimore* (1906).

EDITH WHARTON (1862) was born in New York. Mrs. Wharton has always ranked high among contemporary workers in fiction. Her latest novel, *The Fruit of the Tree* (1907), fully satisfies the most enthusiastic admirers of *The Great Inclination* (1889) or *The House of Mirth* (1905). Her interesting volumes on *Italian Villas and their Gardens* and on *Italian Backgrounds* have also been read widely.

MARY FLEANOR WILKINS (FREEMAN)—1862—was born at Randolph, Massachusetts. No other writer, perhaps, has so exquisitely portrayed the quiet charm and picturesque dignity of early life in New England.

Her work is frankly feminine, dwelling much on the pathos of spinsterhood ; but its character-drawing is peculiarly subtle throughout, and few writers can tell a simple love-story with more delicate sympathy. Her fiction vignettes resemble dainty bits of porcelain, of which the artistic value lies in fine tracery and subdued tints. Yet Miss Wilkins always touches a note of genuine humanity. Her characters live, though in a faded atmosphere within narrow limits. It would be hard for any lover of good work to name a favourite between *A Humble Romance*, *Jane Field*, *The Love of Parson Lord*, or *By the Might of the Soul*.

PRINCESS AMÉLIE TROUBETSKOI ("Amélie Rives") was born at Richmond, Virginia, in 1863, and will always be known in literature by her maiden name, though she has been twice married. Her most popular novel, *Virginia of Virginia*, reveals by its title the domain of fiction which this accomplished writer has made peculiarly her own. Some readers, however, find *The Quick or the Dead*, her first novel, a stronger work ; and *Damsel Errant* has also great charm.

ROBERT WILLIAM CHAMBERS (1865) is a native of Brooklyn. Several of his novels owe much to his familiarity with the art students of Paris, and others reveal an unusually fantastic imagination. But Mr. Chambers is most at home in the very latest developments of American society and commerce. His methods are realistic. Such novels as *The Younger Set* and *The Firing Line* are revelations—at least, to English readers—of character types, which reflect, with almost cruel intensity, a most complex social fabric. Yet, like our own Gissing, Mr. Chambers is at heart a romantic idealist. He believes very much indeed in "the truly good." Amidst wealth and decadence, luxury and squalor, he holds to an infinite hope for "the younger set."

MARY JOHNSTON (1870) was born at Buchanan, in Virginia, and early acquired a leading position, both in England and America, among the modern

novelists of her country. Her reputation was established by her first work, *Prisoners of Hope* (1898), and fully maintained by *Audrey* (1901) and *The Goddess of Reason* (1907).

ALICE HEGAN RICE (1870) was born at Shelbyville, Kentucky, and has of late years enjoyed a phenomenal reputation on both sides of the Atlantic, which is fully merited by the charm and originality of her work. *Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch* (1901) has added a new character to the world's fiction. Her heroic optimism, combined as it is with real sympathy and a genius for the unexpectedly practical, must go straight to the heart of every reader not spoilt by modernity. Once known, she can never be forgotten, and her simple faith and kindliness must prove more eloquent towards goodness than the most popular of sermons. *Lovey Mary* (1903) reveals similar power, in no way diminished by exercise; and neither *Sandy* nor *Captain June* are at all less fascinating. But Mrs. Rice will live, and live honoured, as the creator of Mrs. Wiggs.

WINSTON CHURCHILL (1871) was born at St. Louis, and has long been one of the most popular of the younger American novelists. He published *The Title Mart*, a comedy, in 1906, and the famous novels *Richard Carvel* (1899), *The Crisis* (1901), and *The Crossing* (1903).

UPTON SINCLAIR (1878) was born at Baltimore. Mr. Sinclair is an ardent socialist; and, having taken part in the government investigation of the Chicago stockyards, one day startled the world by issuing a passionate indictment of the methods there prevalent—his now famous *The Jungle* (1906). The reputation thus acquired was no doubt in part accidental, but it is not altogether without more solid foundation, as will be readily admitted by readers of his *Springtime and Harvest* (1901) or his *The Overman* (1907).

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- JAMES KIRKE PAULDING.—(1779-1860)—associated with Irving in *Salmagundi*—*John Bull and Brother Jonathan* ; *Westward Ho !*
- JOHN P. KENNEDY.—(1795-1870)—Baltimore—follower of Irving—*Swallow Barn* ; *Horse-Shoe Robinson*.
- WILLIAM G. SIMMS.—(1806-1870)—planter of South Carolina—*Guy Rivers* ; *Beauchamp* ; *Wigwam and Cabin*.
- RICHARD HENRY DANA.—(1815-1882)—son of R. H. Dana the poet—lawyer—*Two Years before the Mast*.
- FRANCIS RICHARD STOCKTON.—(1834-1902)—Philadelphia—a wood-engraver, then a newspaper correspondent—*Rudder Grange* ; *The Lady or the Tiger ?* *Negative Gravity*, and many humorous short stories.
- EDWARD EGGLESTON.—(1837-1902)—clergyman—*The Hoosier Schoolmaster* ; *The Circuit Rider* ; *Roxy*, etc.—also a historian.
- ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS WARD.—(1844)—Boston—*The Gates Ajar*, etc., and *Poems*.
- JULIAN HAWTHORNE.—(born 1846)—Boston—a civil engineer—*Idolatry* ; *Bressant* ; *The Pearl-Shell Necklace* ; *Garth* ; *Fortune's Fool* ; *Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife*, a biography of his father.

Our list must close with the names of CATHERINE M. SEDGWICK (*Hope Leslie*) ; ELIZABETH WETHERELL (Susan Warner) *The Wide, Wide World* and *Queechy*) ; CAROLINE M. KIRKLAND (*New Home* and *Forest Life*) ; and SAMUEL GOODRICH (Petel Parley), author of an immense number of tales and educational works.

## HISTORIANS.

GEORGE TICKNOR (1791-1871), born at Boston, preceded Longfellow in the chair of Modern Literature at Harvard. A *History of Spanish Literature* (1849) from his pen ranks, for learning, sound criticism, and literary merit, with the very highest works of its class. He was at first a lawyer, but after practising at the Bar for a year he abandoned the profession, and devoted himself to travel and study. He spent four years in Europe, living successively at London, Paris, Rome, Madrid, Lisbon, and other famous cities. Besides his *History*, referred to above, he wrote a *Life of Lafayette*, and a memoir of Prescott, the historian. Ticknor's *Life, Letters, and Journals* were published in two volumes in 1876.

GEORGE BANCROFT (1800-1891) was born at Worcester, Massachusetts, and graduated at Harvard in 1817, but afterwards continued his studies in Germany.

On returning to America he entered the Church, but soon abandoned that profession for literature. His first book was a small volume of *Poems*. He then translated some historical manuals from the German, and also opened a school at Northampton. The first volume of his great work, *A History of the United States, from the Discovery of the Continent*, appeared in 1834, and at once established his reputation as a painstaking and accurate historian, and as a lucid writer. The third volume, completing the work, was issued in 1840. In 1846, Bancroft was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain. Between 1852 and 1882 he published continuations of his American History. A revised edition of the complete *History of the United States*, in six volumes, was published in 1882-84.

ULYSSES SIMPSON GRANT (1822-1885) was born at Point Pleasant, in South Ohio, the son of a tanner. He distinguished himself in the Mexican War, and ultimately became sole commander of the American army. In 1868 and 1872 he was elected President, but in later life lost all his money through a bank failure in New York. Further attacked, in poverty, by incurable cancer, he heroically set about writing the story of his life, in order to leave something for his wife. Though his great *Personal Memoirs* were not actually finished at his death, they fulfilled their object, and incidentally established his literary fame.

Although thus known only for one work, undertaken when he could neither eat nor sleep without pain and only speak with difficulty, Grant was not an unpractised writer; and the enormous bulk of his dispatches, letters, and orders extant in the official war records, reveals nobility of character and a masterly intellect. The *Memoirs* are dignified and lucid, singularly pure in diction. Through life he spoke only when he had something to say, and was quite clear about the best way of saying it, always employing the Anglo-Saxon, without slang or dialect. So it is with his written work. It does not fully reveal the

man, but tells, without emotion or malice, the history of a great man and his country. He wrote first the story of his campaigns, then the adventures of youth in Mexico and on the coast. The first and best volume was written entirely by himself; his tone and temper dominate the whole.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

- JARED SPARKS.—(1789-1866)—editor of the *Library of American Biography*; edited writings of Washington and Franklin.  
 JOHN GORHAM PALFREY.—(1796-1881)—*History of New England*.  
 WILLIAM HENRY SEWARD.—(1801-1872)—statesman—*Diplomatic History of the Civil War*; *Life of John Quincy Adams*.  
 CHARLES ETIENNE ARTHUR GAYARRÉ.—(1805-1895)—New Orleans—lawyer and cultured scholar—particularly distinguished as the historian of Louisiana and as author of the attractive novel, *Fernando de Lemos*.  
 RICHARD HILDRETH.—(1807-1865)—Massachusetts—*History of the United States*; *Japan as it Was and Is*.  
 JEFFERSON DAVIS.—(1808-1889)—President of the Confederate States—*The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*.  
 ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS.—(1812-1883)—*A Pictorial History of the United States*; *The War between the States*.

## HUMORISTS.

SEBA SMITH (1792-1868) was born in Maine, and married the precocious Miss Elizabeth Oakes Prince, said to have been the first woman lecturer in America. His letters to President Jackson, in "Down East" dialect, from "Major Jack Downing of Donningville," were widely read and frequently reprinted. The political philosophy of the Major may also be enjoyed in *Thirty Years out of the Senate* (1859).

JOSEPH G. BALDWIN (1815-1864) was born in Virginia, and after practising law in Alabama became a Californian judge. His *Party Leaders*, though originally more popular for its personalities, is not so clever as *Flush Times in Alabama and Mississippi* (1853), which shows real humour in describing the hustlers and hustled of the (then) new Cotton States.

CHARLES FARRAR BROWNE (1834-1867), known to the world as "Artemus Ward," was born in Maine, and, starting life as a printer, gradually acquired the



habits of writing for the papers he had helped to "compose." His popularity was first increased by his extraordinary success as a "comic" lecturer, both in England and America. His life was spent in an almost continuous struggle with ill-health. Though Artemus Ward is not so much admired by us to-day as by those under the charm of his irresistible personality, his work contains true wit and fantastic humour. *Artemus Ward, His Book*, and *Artemus Ward in England*, perhaps, deserve more attention than they are generally accorded. His genius was essentially whimsical.

JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS ("Uncle Remus") was born at Eatonton, Georgia, in 1848, and began life as a printer's apprentice. But the desire for expression soon proved irresistible, and Mr. Harris is now known and loved throughout the English-speaking world for the racy qualities of his own delightful humour. "Uncle Remus" and "Brer Rabbit," of whom he told numerous stories between 1880 and 1907, are now very familiar household words. Their tricks of speech have increased our vocabularies of slang no less than our knowledge of the animal world, as pictured by the lively imagination of observant mankind. The humour of these volumes is mainly dependent on sheer absurdity, and the author makes no attempt at realism. His work is no less artistic than it is popular. Mr. Harris, who died in 1909, also issued a series of volumes of fascinating Georgian sketches, besides *Little Mr. Thimble-finger*, *Sister Jane*, and *The Chronicles of Aunt Minervy Ann*.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

AUGUSTUS BALDWIN LONGSTRIEL.—(1790-1870)—*Georgia ; Georgia Scenes*.

THOMAS CHANDLER HALIBURTON.—(1796-1865)—Nova Scotia—*The Clockmaker ; or, Sayings and Doings of Samuel Slick of Slickville*.

WILLIAM TAPPAN THOMPSON.—(1812-1882)—Ohio—*Major Jones's Courtship*.

HENRY WHEELER SHAW.—(Josh Billings—1818-1885)—Massachusetts—*Essa on the Muel ; Farmers' Almanax*.

GEORGE HORATIUS DERBY (John Phoenix—1823-1861)—Massachusetts—*Phoenixiana*; *Squibob Papers*.

DAVID ROSS LOCKE.—(1833-1888)—Ohio—*Swingin' Round the Circle*; *Struggles*, etc.

#### THEOLOGIAN AND PHILOSOPHERS.

NOAH PORTER (1811-1892). He became Professor of Metaphysics and Moral Philosophy at Yale in 1846, and was president of that university from 1871 till 1886, when he resigned. His treatise on *The Human Intellect* (1868) is an elaborate and thorough work, and has long been a standard text-book for students of philosophy. He also wrote *Elements of Intellectual Science*, *Elements of Moral Science*, and an examination of *Kant's Ethics*. Of books partly philosophical and partly theological he wrote, *Agnosticism: a Doctrine of Despair*, and *Christianity as History, Doctrine, and Life*. He edited successive editions of *Webster's Dictionary* from 1864 till 1891.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813-1887), brother of the authoress of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and son of Lyman Beecher, an eminent Presbyterian divine, and for twenty years President of Lane Theological Seminary, who had seven sons, all of them clergymen. Henry Ward Beecher acquired a reputation as a pulpit orator while still a young man. At the same time he took a leading part in the anti-slavery movement. In 1847 he became pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church, Brooklyn, and he very soon attracted a vast congregation by his eloquence and independence in pleading the causes of temperance and emancipation. For twenty years he was a contributor to *The Independent*. At last he quarrelled with the editor of that paper, and became editor of *The Christian Union*. On the outbreak of the Civil War, his congregation raised a regiment for service in the field in defence of the Federal Government. He visited Great Britain in 1863, and again in 1886, on both occasions delivering eloquent addresses. Among his chief writings are his *Yale Lectures on Preaching*;

*Aids to Prayer; Lectures to Young Men; Norwood, or Village Life in New England.*

WILLIAM JAMES (1842-1910) was the elder son of that original and acute thinker, Henry James (1811-1882), an "Ishmaelite among Swedenborgians," and brother of the novelist. After acting for a time at Harvard as Professor of Comparative Anatomy and Physiology, he turned to the fields more exclusively his own. The two volumes of his *Principles of Psychology* (1890) are a recognized text-book, while *Human Immortality* (1899) treats with critical scholarship a subject once more dominating thought. Among his later works may be mentioned *Varieties of Religious Experience: a Study in Human Nature* (1902), which has exerted a wide influence, and *Pragmatism: a New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (1907), the text-book of the new philosophy of Humanism, which has many disciples on both sides of the Atlantic. His style has subtlety not dissimilar to his brother's, and no philosopher on either side of the Atlantic can now overlook his work.

GEORGE SANTAYANA (1863) is a native of Madrid, but settled in America about 1872, and is now Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Harvard. His poetry has the dignity of classic verse, and his criticism is pre-eminently philosophic. An enthusiast for pagan art, he may seem cold and inhuman towards spiritual morality, but his historic outlook on the growth of religions is comprehensive and acute. In *The Sense of Beauty* (1896), *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900), and *The Life of Reason* (1905) he has given us criticism on art, life, and letters which cannot be studied without admiration. The reader who most strenuously denies his conclusions will yet find in their presentment much food for thought. His prose style is singularly beautiful and impressive.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

CHARLES HODGE.—(1797-1878)—Philadelphia—*Systematic Theology*, and various Biblical commentaries.

MARK HOPKINS.—(1802-1887)—President of Williams Congrega-

tional College, Williamstown, Massachusetts, and Professor of Moral Philosophy—*Evidences of Christianity*; *The Law of Love, and Love as a Law*; *Outline Study of Man*.

JOSEPH ADDISON ALEXANDER.—(1809-1860)—Philadelphia—professor in Princeton College—chief works on *Isaiah* and the *Psalms*—associated with Dr. Hodge in *Commentary on the New Testament*.

PHILIP SCHAFF.—(1819-1893)—a Swiss by birth—President of the American Old Testament Revision Committee—*Creeds of Christendom*; *History of the Christian Church*, etc.

## TRAVELLERS.

EDWARD ROBINSON (1794-1863), born at Southington, Connecticut, before entering on his duties as Professor of Biblical Literature in the Union Theological Seminary at New York, spent two years in the Holy Land and the surrounding countries, which on his return he described in *Biblical Researches in Palestine and Adjacent Countries* (1841). This learned and valuable work obtained for him the gold medal of the Geographical Society.

JOHN LLOYD STEPHENS (1805-1852), born in New Jersey in 1805, published in 1836-1837 *Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, Yucatan, and Central America*. Italy, Greece, Turkey, Russia, Germany, and France came also within the limit of his wanderings. Having overtaken his strength in surveying the Isthmus of Panama, with a view to the connection of the oceans by a railway, he died at the age of forty-seven.

SIR HENRY MORTON STANLEY (1841-1908) was born at Denbigh, in Wales. His original name was John Rowlands, but having gone to America as a cabin-boy, he was adopted by a Mr. Stanley, whose name he assumed. His first literary work was as a newspaper correspondent in the American Civil War and in Abyssinia. In 1869 the proprietor of *The New York Herald* sent him to Africa to search for David Livingstone, whom he found at Ujiji in November 1871. This was the subject of his first book, *How I Found Livingstone* (1872), published on his return to England. In 1874 *The New York Herald* and the *London Daily Telegraph*

jointly sent him out to Central Africa to continue Livingstone's explorations. He explored the Victoria Nyanza, and the whole course of the Congo River, of which only a small part was previously known. This gave rise to his second book, *Through the Dark Continent* (1878). He was next employed by the King of the Belgians to organize the Congo Free State, and he spent there five or six years. Having returned to England, he started in 1887 on an expedition for the relief of Emin Pasha. He entered Central Africa on the west coast, and emerged on the east coast in 1889, having accomplished his object. This journey was described in his book *In Darkest Africa* (1890). In 1892 Stanley became a naturalized Englishman, and he was returned to Parliament in 1895.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

ELISHA KENT KANE.—(1820-1857)—surgeon in the United States Navy—travelled in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe; took part in two Grinnell expeditions in search of Franklin, the second of which he commanded—*Arctic Explorations in Search of Franklin*.

EUGENE SCHUYLER.—(1840-1890)—diplomatist—traveller in Turkestan and Russia—*Turkestan*; *Peter the Great*.

Mention may also be made in this section of the Arctic explorations of CHARLES FRANCIS HALL (1821-1871) and ISAAC ISRAEL HAYES (1832-1881); the archæological researches in Central America of EPHRAIM GEORGE SQUIER (1821-1888).

#### ESSAYISTS AND ORATORS.

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING (1780-1842) was born at Newport, in Rhode Island. Though ranking high among theologians, he finds a fitter place with the most eloquent American essayists. After a distinguished career at Harvard, he lived for a while as a tutor in Virginia, and in 1803 was ordained minister of a Congregational church in Boston. Ultimately he became a prominent Unitarian. *National Literature*, *Milton*, *Napoleon*, *Fenelon*, *Self-Culture*, *The Elevation of the Labouring Classes*, are among the subjects of his books and lectures. Brilliant and original thoughts

clothed in language of rare fire and beauty, characterize all the works of this eminent man. *Discourses on the Evidences of Revealed Religion* form his chief theological work. He was a prominent hater of slavery.

DANIEL WEBSTER (1782-1852) was born in Salisbury, New Hampshire, educated at Dartmouth, and admitted to the Bar in 1805. As an advocate he very quickly obtained distinction, and his reputation in the courts always rivalled, if it did not excel, his oratorical mastery in Congress and Senate. He continued interpreting the constitution and electrifying politics until death. Collected posthumously in book form, his speeches excite almost as much enthusiasm to-day as among those under the influence of his magnetic personality. Admittedly the greatest of American orators, and the prophet of union-building patriotism, Webster's position in literature is still uncertain. To many he seems the equal of Burke and Cicero, in some respects their superior; by others, who would demand more colour and more vivacity in style, he is found wanting in the supreme qualities of intellect or imagination. For us it may be enough to know that on all occasions of high national importance he moved men to the making of history. His deadly earnestness always carried conviction, yet the inspiring passion beneath never broke bounds to cloud his reasonableness or common sense. He was no less glowing and persuasive than virile and masterful. To the unmatched charm of his delivery and of his beautifully modulated intonation we have ample testimony. Carlyle found "much *silent Berserker rage*" in "that amorphous, crag-like face; the dull black eyes under the precipice of brows, like dull anthracite furnaces needing only to be *blown*; the mastiff mouth, accurately closed." His most celebrated case was won (1817) in the defence of his old college, Dartmouth; his most celebrated political orations were delivered on the Bunker Hill monument, the deaths of Adams and Jefferson, on the "Defence of the Kennistour," and



above all as a "Reply to Hayne." "In his legal oratory he is simpler and more direct than elsewhere; in his great senatorial speeches he is more rhetorical and splendid; in his correspondence he is more terse and pointed; yet he is always Roman."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809-1865), the great President, born in Hardin county, Kentucky, was almost entirely self-taught. He was called to the Bar of Illinois in 1837, and there acquired the phenomenal compactness and keen logic which characterizes all his work, no less than its occasional great beauty of expression. He was elected President in 1860 and 1864, being assassinated (by John Wilkes Booth) soon after the beginning of his second term of office. Lincoln was one of the distinguished products of the essential vitality of American democracy. He has all the mother wit and native shrewdness of a healthy-minded, sound-hearted people, controlled by rare intellectual power and fine seriousness of thought and purpose, and a touch of sublime eloquence. In his famous *Inaugurals* and *The Gettysburg Address* the professed rhetorician can find no flaw. The courageous address at the Cooper Union of 1860, his speeches against Douglas, and many of his letters, reveal the man. Fed on Shakespeare and the Bible, he is at once splendid and severe, persuasive and lucid.

SARAH MARGARET FULLER (1810-1850) was born on May 23, 1810, in Cambridgeport, and forced by her father's ambition into morbid precocity. His death, when she was twenty-five, transformed the young student of languages to an unselfish sister and daughter (to the widowed Mrs. Fuller); and after some not unsuccessful teaching, she became accredited fountain-head and exemplar of that Transcendentalism which gave us Thoreau and Emerson, gaining more than the admiration of its devotees or the abuse of the scoffer. Being now settled in Boston, she conducted "Conversations" for several years, and edited that remarkable organ of the movement entitled *The Dial*, of

which Emerson himself afterwards took charge. Margaret Fuller, however, did not spend her whole life within Boston culture. On giving up *The Dial* in 1843, she travelled in what was then the far west of Illinois and Wisconsin, became literary critic to the New York *Tribune*, and visited Europe in 1846. During the revolutionary epoch, from 1847 to 1850, she lived mainly in Rome, became intimate with Mazzini, contracted a secret romantic marriage with Marquis Ossoli, and had one son. When Rome surrendered to the French, the Ossolis, after escaping to Florence, set sail for America, but were all drowned off Fire Island just before reaching New York. Margaret Fuller's reputation has suffered considerably from natural impatience with the idolatry of her friends, but she was "easily the best sympathetic critic" of America before 1850, as no reader of her well-read *Papers on Literature and Art* (1846) can deny; and her *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1844) is nobly sound.

THEODORE PARKER (1810-1860) was born at Lexington, and early proved himself a radical among radicals. The militant advocate of the Transcendentalists, he was an eminently practical and sensible man, by far the most scholarly of the body. His *Lessons from the World of Matter and the World of Man* and his *Sermons for the Times* are written in excellent prose.

WENDELL PHILLIPS (1811-1884) of Boston has perhaps lost as much with posterity by his fanatical injustice towards those opposing him as he gained with audiences by the brilliance and daring of his eloquent enthusiasms. Phillips was unquestionably a fanatic; his schemes were frequently unsound; and he was not always just to his opponents. But his denunciations of moral cowardice in those who ought to set an example to mankind, and his transparent honesty, had no little influence on national progress. His earliest public utterance (of 1837) in Faneuil Hall

against the murderers of Lovejoy established a reputation which was fully maintained, though scarcely increased, throughout his career.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817-1862) was born in Concord, Massachusetts, of humble parentage, having both French and Scotch among his ancestors. The simplicity of life resulting from the position of his family led to his scorning a somewhat complex civilization and to his thinking chiefly among woods and fields. After leaving the university, he became intimate with Emerson, and in 1841 went to live with the poet, mainly occupying himself with gardening and similar practical services. Two years later he became for a short time tutor to Emerson's nephew, and undertook a little miscellaneous journalism. In 1844 he went home to make pencils in his father's shop, and during the following year built his now famous cabin on Walden Pond, to be alone with nature. A great deal of quite undeserved odium has been cast on Thoreau for this supposed isolation from mankind, which may be easily dispelled by only a superficial study of his work. Walden was only two miles from his own home, and he is far less eloquent on the wilds than most poets. "The partially cultivated country it is which has chiefly inspired, and will continue to inspire, the strains of poets such as compose the mass of any literature," says Thoreau. "What is nature unless there is human life passing within it? Many joys and many sorrows are the lights and shadows in which she shines most beautiful." In fact, though barren enough of incident, Thoreau's life was active and not unsociable. He was in some request as a lecturer, and the cheerful courage of his later years, enfeebled by consumption, proves his nature to have been manly and sympathetic. He was scarcely read at all during his life, but the fame of his works, now published in eleven volumes, has been steadily on the increase of recent years, and at least one of them may be fairly regarded as a

classic. This is *Walden ; or, Life in the Woods* (1854), a fascinating record of personal experience, enriched by original speculation and suggestive comment. The similar *Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers* (1849) has passages of equal charm, but is provokingly discursive. *Cape Cod* reveals wide reading and accurate observation, and the volume of *Excursions* contains many quite admirable essays. Everything he wrote was literature. On the sound basis of an "irrepressible satisfaction with the gift of life" he built up a philosophy, not uninfluenced by Transcendentalism, which is never trivial. He was first an artist in words, secondly a naturalist.

EDWARD PERCY WHIPPLE (1819-1886) of Massachusetts was one of the most popular lecturers and critics of his day, though not now much read. Neither original nor profound, he was well abreast with the times, and obviously sincere—perhaps too much concerned with the morality of his subject. He read widely, however, and enlivened his pages with happily chosen illustration and anecdote. He was not afraid to praise or blame with emphasis. A conscientious worker, he only published nine volumes, of which the two entitled *Essays and Reviews* (1843) were the most popular, though *The Literature of the Age of Elizabeth* is generally considered the best.

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS (1824-1892) was born in Providence, but his family moved to New York when he was fifteen. He was a most versatile writer, and further endeared himself to all good Americans by his untiring services to political reform. Nor are his speeches—particularly the more recent—of less account as literature than any other part of his work. At sixteen he went to Brook Farm, at twenty-two to Europe, and for many years proved himself true patriot as the outspoken editor of *Putnam's Magazine* and an eloquent lecturer against slavery. The impressionist travel volumes which Curtis issued in 1851-52, under titles *Nile Notes of a Howadji* and

*The Howadji in Syria*, are somewhat exotic for modern taste; nor can we now read his *Lotus-eating* (1852), letters from fashionable watering-places. The tender studies of *Prue and I* (1856) have all the charm of ideal sentimentality; but the satiric *Potiphar Papers* are exaggerated, and *Trumps*, his one novel, is not read to-day. Curtis worked under New England influences in a New York atmosphere. His personality is most surely and most permanently revealed in *The Editor's Easy-Chair*, originally issued in *Harper's Monthly* from 1853, and reprinted in three slender volumes—a collection of graceful essays on men and books, as excellent as any of their kind. Here we find him, as always, at once an artist and a moralist, a lover of beautiful ideals, very earnest about that noble patriotism which flowered into practical activity during his later life.

WILLIAM WINTER (1836) was born at Gloucester, Massachusetts. Among the most distinguished and learned essayists of the day, he has made himself master of everything concerning the drama, past and present. His lives of Edwin Booth, Mary Anderson, Ada Rehan, and Irving are excellent of their kind, while in such volumes as *Shakespeare's England* or *Shadows of the Stage* he shows more exhaustive insight in the historic and general aspects of his favourite art.

(JAMES) BRANDER MATTHEWS (1852) is, in all probability, more widely read and more generally recognized than any other critical writer in America. Being trained as a barrister, he has taken an active part in many movements towards improving the position and protecting the rights of all writers in the States. He was one of the founders of the Authors' Club, and a leading organizer of the Copyright League. He is an advocate of simplified spelling. His own work shows remarkable versatility, including *The Theatres of Paris*, his first work; *Margery's Lovers*, and other dramas; *A Family Tree*, and other stories; such critical volumes

as *Outlines on Local Colour* and *The Historical Novel*; besides an able monograph on *Bookbindings, Old and New*, and the suggestive *Pen and Ink*.

AGNES REPPLIER (1858) was born, of French ancestry, in Philadelphia, and is now among the most distinguished Roman Catholic essayists in America. *Essays in Miniature* (1893), *Essays in Idleness* (1893), and *The Fireside Sphinx* (1901) reveal their author's graceful insight in its most familiar vein; while the appeal of *Compromises* (1904) and *In Our Convent Days* (1905) is more strenuous.

BOOKER TALIAFERRO WASHINGTON (1859) was born near Hale's Ford, Virginia, and is now one of the most familiar personalities in America. He is of African descent, and a popular speaker throughout the country on racial and educational subjects. He has been recently appointed head of the Tuskegee Institute, Alabama. The appeal is obvious of such eloquent volumes as *Up from Slavery* (1901), *The Future of the American Negro* (1899), and *The Negro in Business* (1907). Mr. Booker Washington has his subject at heart, and writes with all the moral weight of a position which is unique alike in the annals of his race and his country. The mere titles of his other books—*Character Building* (1902), *Working with the Hands* (1904), and *Putting the Most into Life* (1906)—will speak for themselves.

JAMES GIBBONS HUNEKER (1860)—the Bernard Shaw of America—was born in Philadelphia, and, like his English prototype, has proved himself no less acute and sympathetic in criticizing music than in dogmatizing on the drama. Mr. Huneke also studied the piano in Paris, and wrote the article on music in *The New International Cyclopædia*. His various volumes of collected essays bear titles which at once reveal their author's standpoint and his manner. Of these *Iconoclasts* is the most popular, though *Melomaniacs*, *Overtures*, and *Visionaries* are perhaps equally characteristic.



PAUL ELMER MORE (1864) is a native of St. Louis, and was educated at Harvard. Mr. More's graceful poetical works (*Helena and Occasional Poems*) have never attracted the attention they merit, and *The Jessica Letters* (with Mrs. L. H. Farris) were not widely read; but the critical *Shelburne Essays*, of which he has now published five volumes, have brought their author a reputation he little expected, but has none the less fully justified. Finding his suggestive criticism too quietly thoughtful and too lengthy for the magazines, he one day determined on the experiment (usually a hazardous one) of first issuing them in volume form, and courage in his case found its reward. He writes with no less charm and insight on ancient and modern English writers than on Americans.

## SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

RUFUS WILMOT GRISWOLD.—(1815-1857)—Benson, Vermont—Baptist minister—*Curiosities of American Literature; Poets and Prose-Writers of America*.

RICHARD GRANT WHITE.—(1821-1885)—New York—lawyer, art critic, and philologist—*Words and their Uses; Everyday English; Memoirs of William Shakespeare; Studies in Shakespeare; The New Gospel of Peace according to St. Benjamin*; edited two editions of Shakespeare.

THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON.—(1823-1911)—Cambridge, Massachusetts—*Outdoor Papers; Atlantic Essays; Oldport Days*.

FRANCIS HENRY UNDERWOOD.—(1825-1894)—Enfield, Massachusetts—essayist and novelist—*Handbook of English Literature; James Russell Lowell; Quabbine*.

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.—(1829-1900)—Plainfield, Massachusetts—lawyer and journalist—*My Summer in a Garden; Black-Log Studies; In the Wilderness; Roundabout Journeys*, etc.

JOHN BURROUGHS.—(1837)—Roxbury, New York State—*Winter Sunshine; Wake, Robin; Fresh Fields; Signs and Seasons; Indoor Studies*; also *Essays on Thoreau, Emerson, Carlyle, and Matthew Arnold*.

*Writers on Science.*

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON.—(1780-1851)—son of a French admiral settled in Louisiana—travelled much—*Birds of America*.

HENRY CHARLES CAREY.—(1793-1879)—Philadelphia—a bookseller—*The Credit System; Past, Present, and Future; The Slave Trade; Principles of Political Economy; Principles of Social Science*.

ORVILLE DEWEY.—(1794-1882)—Sheffield, Massachusetts—Unitarian minister—*Moral Views of Commerce, Society, and Politics; The Old World and the New*.

*Orators.*

HENRY CLAY.—(1777-1852)—Virginia—statesman—*Speeches* on the War with Great Britain (1812), on the Abolition of Slavery, etc.

JOHN C. CALHOUN.—(1782-1850)—Abbeville County, South Carolina—statesman—*Speeches* in support of the doctrine of States' Rights.

EDWARD EVERETT.—(1794-1865)—Dorchester, Massachusetts—professor, clergyman, statesman—*Orations and Speeches* (against Slavery).



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